

SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

Stars that move back and forth? Stars that chase after cars? Of course not...yet many of the witnesses claimed that 's just what they saw.

Allan Hendry - The UFO Handbook



Cover: Sequential frames of the star Sirius while it was twinkling in my telescope. Note how the colors and the shape of the star can shift despite the star being in focus.

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Once more unto the breach...

My focus this issue was drawn back to the Rendlesham and Roswell cases as there has been some recent discussion that inspired me to write about them. In one of those articles, I used my own military evaluations to provide examples of how they are often written. I had to think hard about revealing these records simply because I did not want to appear to be bragging. I would like to also point out that not only did I reveal some of my best performance evaluations, I also revealed some of my worst. For those, who find Rendlesham and Roswell a tired topic, you may find the article by Marty Kottmeyer with the title of "doorway amnesia" more to your liking.

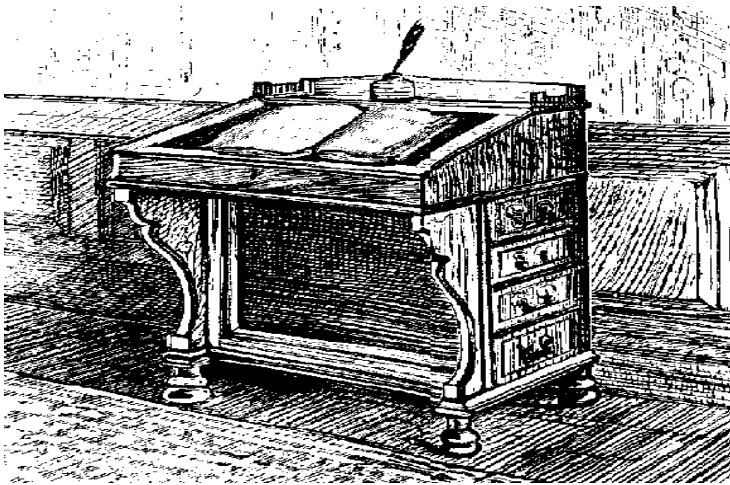
Last issue's "The UFO evidence under review" article received some interesting input on other incidents to consider in future articles. I appreciate these recommendations and I will get to them. Because I plan on designating space for only one case each issue, they will have to wait for now. I had already selected the case for this issue because there were several versions about what transpired. I will be interested in hearing any additional information about the case if any of my readers can assist.

One of the more interesting events that I saw in the past few months involved amateur astronomers. Two amateur astronomers, independent of each other, visually observed and recorded an asteroid or comet impacting Jupiter. This is credit to the dedication and hard work of these observers. Not only did one see the event visually, another happened to be recording it through his telescope at the same time, which confirmed the visual observation. This impact is a rare transient event and can be considered the equivalent to a "real UFO" event (especially if you use some of the statistics promoted by some). For some reason UFOlogists don't bother to dedicate themselves for gathering this kind of data. I guess it is much easier to promote UFO theories than to go out and actually acquire real data that can be used. It is time for UFOlogical organizations to step up to the plate instead of complaining from the cheap seats about how science ignores them.

Speaking of complaints, I received some more from Anthony Bragalia. He told me that he would swear on "his mother's grave" that the Socorro case is a hoax and felt that some of my comments about his Socorro research was defamatory. I had questioned his quoting of Stirling Colgate because of comments made by Dr. Colgate, back in 2009, regarding Bragalia's writings. In order to help resolve the issue, Dave Thomas talked to Professor Colgate. After reading the most recent article, Colgate felt he was quoted accurately. Therefore, my concern that Bragalia had quoted Dr. Colgate out of context was unnecessary. As I have stated previously, I am not even sure why Mr. Bragalia feels my opinion matters on this since it is the UFOlogists he needs to convince. He now states that none of the students that were supposedly involved would ever expose themselves because it would be embarrassing for them to do so. Bragalia also told me that he would never reveal who they were just to prove his argument. If he is going to base his theory on second and third hand stories, he is not going to convince very many people.

Who's blogging UFOs?

Hot topics and varied opinions



Anthony Bragalia's Socorro hoax theory has come under fire from fellow crashologist, David Rudiak. Rudiak has been pointing out problems with the idea that a balloon of some sort could explain the event. He has presented weather data that is pretty convincing showing the winds blowing in the opposite direction Zamora stated the UFO departed. This implies that whatever Lonnie Zamora saw could not be propelled by the winds. To counter this, Bragalia had to write up a response that basically stated that they could not trust the Zamora testimony to be accurate and that these "Chinese lantern"-type balloons are propelled by hot-air, which makes it possible that they can fly against the wind! I think Mr. Bragalia's arguments in this area fail miserably. The only possible way for the balloon explanation to work under the conditions noted by Rudiak is for Zamora to be completely off in his observations of direction by 90 degrees or more. It seems unlikely that this was the case.

On another note regarding this discussion, Dave Thomas did eventually talk to Stirling Colgate and show him the article that Bragalia wrote. Dr. Colgate told Thomas that he did not retain the e-mails he had with Bragalia so we are not sure exactly what transcribed between the two. Colgate did state that he felt he had been quoted correctly, which still leaves us with second and third hand information being presented as factual. More information, not speculation and unsupported claims, is needed to verify the story.

There was a special UFO presentation at the National Atomic Testing Museum. A quick look at the speaker's list told me that the claim that Military UFO secrets were going to be revealed was an exaggerated statement. Colonel Halt (Rendlesham), Colonel Friend and Coleman (Blue Book), Nick Pope (Ex-MOD and UFO propagandist), and Colonel Alexander are all well known in the UFO community. If they had anything earth shattering to reveal, they would have stated it long ago.

Coleman told Billy Cox that he had been exposed to radiation from an atomic bomb test that resulted in him having Leukemia. He then drank some sort of miracle cure that made it go away. Clearly an extraordinary tale that needs to be examined. Is it a tall tale or is Coleman's doctor hiding a great medical discovery?

Coleman also told Cox that he had a blockbuster revelation but then chickened out at the last minute. He now figures he will never tell anybody about it. Considering the fact that he has a willing mouthpiece in Cox, I am not sure what is holding him back other than the idea that his story is too wild to believe and will be unconfirmable. Robert Friend's presence may have had something to do with him backing out.

It was Charles Halt, who stole the show, when he accused both the US and British government of covering up the Rendlesham case. I find that ironic from somebody, who had in his possession, or knew about, the original statements made by the witnesses for many years but never revealed them to the public. I am sure Halt truly believes all of this but he is beginning to sound like a conspiracy fanatic.

When interviewed, Robert Friend stated that the government should get back into the UFO investigation business. He did not seem to want to make it a USAF project but what organization would do it? NASA did not seem too interested in the 1970s and probably is not interested today. Why waste your budget on a project that accomplishes what the USAF experienced back in the 1960s? UFO organizations would criticize any explanations they don't agree with and then lobby politicians to end the cover-up this agency was conducting! Does this sound familiar? It is a no win situation for a government organization that does not proclaim that UFOs are "somebody else's craft". I seriously doubt that the US government is going to give money to CUFOs or MUFON to study UFOs. Do these people actually believe the taxpayers and congress would willingly spend money on such a program?

Astronomer Derrick Pitts also stated that UFOs should be scientifically investigated. That is an interesting idea to say the least and Lee Spiegel seems to be trying to promote this as something significant. What Spiegel does not recognize (or chooses not to mention) is that, in over six decades of "stamp collecting" UFO stories, nothing has been proven that these reports represent alien spaceships. What Pitts is talking about is a serious effort to collect data that takes out the human element, which MUFON and the other UFO groups have failed to do despite having scientists in their organization. This is actually very simple. All UFOlogists need to do is come up with a decent proposal, using present day technology, to gather data on these UFOs that can be analyzed. Instead, UFOlogists waste their time and money on things that resolve nothing.

Meanwhile, John Harney pointed out the MUFON journal's failure to take a scientific approach when studying UFOs. Among the things he mentioned that caught my eye was Margie Kay's description of a UFO event that had occurred back in Missouri. She appears to be describing the case in May, where she was recorded as stating that she was "90%" sure they were looking at Vega!

Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

Apparently, she could not make a positive identification, which would have been easy for anybody with a basic knowledge of astronomy. The videos associated with this sighting all looked like scintillating stars to me. As Harney implies, MUFON's research seems to lack a scientific approach and is the reason that scientists don't take UFOlogy seriously. Physician heal thyself!

If that wasn't enough criticism about UFOlogy, Nick Redfern had an interesting article on its future. He correctly points out that the decades of collecting UFO stories has proven nothing (other than people can't always identify what they see in the sky and misperception plays a key role in many reports). He requests UFOlogy change its thinking and methodology. I agree completely.

Nick also proposed an explanation for the Kingman crash in Arizona, which was promoted at the last MUFON conference During the same time frame as the UFO crash, there were several atomic bomb tests in Nevada. Drone aircraft, with monkey's aboard, were flown through the atomic cloud. The possibility that one of those drone aircraft crashed near Kingman is something Nick finds plausible. While, the idea is interesting, I doubt that this was the case. Such an accident would have some sort of paper trail. If Nick can find documentation describing a crash of one of these drones near Kingman, I think he would be able to close the deal.

Jack Brewer's UFO Trail took some necessary swipes at various UFO organizations/personalities. His four part science versus sensationalism series went after some of the more prominent individuals but one could easily apply this to the various UFO promoters, who tend to make a living off speaking at UFO conferences.

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2012/08/science-versus-sensationalism-part-one.html>

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2012/09/science-versus-sensationalism-part-two.html>

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2012/09/science-versus-sensationalism-part-two.html>

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2012/09/science-versus-sensationalism-part-four.html>

I am not sure if this was a joke or what but I believe the senior editor of "Veteran's Today" must have lost his mind. He reported that Chinese and US warships were patrolling off the California coast in order to combat underwater UFOs! Not once are any solid details mentioned. It sounds like Veteran's Today is nothing more than a conspiracy journal of some kind. I am a veteran and find this kind of garbage ridiculous. I am sure many of my fellow veterans would question his writing as well.

Martin Willis debated UFOs with Seth Shostak on his podcast. Willis seemed to present cases that ignored the analysis done by skeptics. He made a great deal about the Rendlesham radiation readings and depressions in the dirt. Apparently, he relied heavily on the UFO literature on the subject and ignored the writings of Ian Ridpath. This was evident when he continued his arguments with Shostak on other UFO cases. Willis lacked any specifics in his radar-visual data. He should have cited his best case and not some generic statement about radar sightings. I think Dr. Shostak did a good job of presenting the skeptical arguments against UFOs being "exotic craft" of some kind. Mr. Willis failed to provide anything other than the appeal that he once saw a UFO. "I know what I saw" is not good enough because a majority of the time, the actual sighting can be solved. This means it is more like, "I know what I THINK I saw".

I was pleased to see that there was a lengthy video out there debunking just about everything on the "Ancient Aliens" show. Many decades ago, I was a big ancient astronauts fan/supporter/proponent. However, as I learned more about history, I began to accept less and less of what was presented in those films and books. This video shows all the things wrong with the arguments presented in the show. While the video is over three hours long, it is worth watching. I found the piece about the Egyptian Pyramids very informative. I wonder if Dennis Balthaser finds the explanation compelling?

French skeptic Gilles Fernandez has started his own blog. The blog is titled Skeptics vs. Flying Saucers. That would have been a great Ray Harryhausen movie! It is in french but there are plenty of translation sites to allow it to be read in English. One of his earliest blog entries discussed the Yukon UFO from 1996, which was considered some of UFOlogy's best evidence. Back in SUNlite 4-4, I briefly mentioned this solution. Gilles did a more thorough job on his blog.

Another UFO video turned out to be sky divers. Originally it was suggested that they were sky divers with pyrotechnics over a theme park some 20-30 miles away. The UFOs would have to have been much closer to have been recorded. It was later determined that there were sky divers dropping over a nearby High School's football game, which matched the video. I pretty much recognized them as parachutists with flares when I first saw the clip. It looked a lot like the UFO videos I described in SUNlite 3-1 and 4-1. Looking at the comments on Youtube, it appears that some proponents are still not convinced. Sigh.....

US News and World Report wrote an article about how UFOs are threat to aviation safety. It seems the author, Michael Morella, has been using Leslie Kean's book as his primary source of information. This is not what I would call performing "due diligence". I have yet to see anybody prove that UFOs have caused a single aircraft crash in over sixty years of their existence. One can cite suspected cases (like Mantell or Valentich) but that is not real proof as more mundane explanations exist. The next best thing is to cite those "near miss" cases. Of course, pilots have had "near misses" with fireballs many miles away or near misses with more earthly objects like birds, balloons, etc. The planets and stars have fooled pilots before as well. None of this appears in Morella's article. I think he should be more concerned about real threats instead of the ones created to sell books.

The Roswell Corner

Next time, say "Pretty please with sugar on it"

In an interesting blog entry, Kevin Randle talked about Roswell transparency but then stated that he did not want to tell Lance Moody how they obtained the information from the Nun's diary documented in The truth about the UFO crash at Roswell because Lance was too nasty in his request. Lance may have been somewhat demanding but people have been requesting this information for years. Karl Pflock wrote in both of his books on the subject that the actual diaries were never made public. Was Pflock also nasty in his requests to Randle or was Randle just not willing to give out that information?

Randle would eventually relent to Moody's request and, after two decades, finally reveal the "truth" about the Nun's diary. Neither Schmitt or Randle ever saw the diary entries contrary to what was implied in the book. It was all second hand from one questionable source and a nun, who claimed to have read it. That a nun could recall the exact details seen many years before, in a diary she may have read only once (if at all), is highly questionable. Yet, Randle not only mentioned the diary entry being factual in the Truth about the UFO crash at Roswell, but also mentioned it years later in Conspiracy of Silence! He also told Karl Pflock that Schmitt was able to corroborate the story. Randle now states the footnote in the first book had left out the key part of the sentence which stated "as viewed by Sister Day". Why didn't he tell this to Karl Pflock or publish it in the various books and journals he had written on the subject? Kevin Randle could have set the record straight long ago but chose not to do so until now.

Can you hear me now?

Kevin Randle announced his thoughts concerning the Roswell press release on his blog. He has come to the conclusion that the press release was never issued in written form but was reported to the media via a phone call from Walter Haut. Karl Pflock had drawn this conclusion many years ago. So, this really is no great revelation. Mr. Randle calls this trivia but he ignores the implications of this conclusion.

In the books, UFO crash at Roswell and The truth about the UFO crash at Roswell, Randle and Schmitt made it an important point about how the military desperately ran around retrieving all the copies of the press release. This was based on the testimony of Art McQuiddy and Frank Joyce. Joyce had claimed that the military had come into the offices attempting to find every scrap of paper. If there was no written press release, as Randle now seems to conclude, the military had no reason to go into the offices and ransack them. Does this mean that the memories of McQuiddy and Joyce are faulty and one has to start questioning anything they stated, which could not be verified?

Circleville logic

For the umpteenth time, Kevin Randle tried to compare the Circleville, Ohio case to Roswell. On July 5th, the Circleville newspapers reported the recovery of a "disc" that would be tentatively identified as a RAWIN target and weather balloon in the 8th of July edition (Even that article stated the possibility remained that it could be a flying saucer). Unlike today, not all the news in the country was readily available to everyone. Unless it was published in the local paper or it was part of the base's routine message traffic, the 509th would have been ignorant of what had transpired at Circleville.

Mr. Randle pointed out that, unlike Roswell, the locals in Circleville seemed to be able to identify the object without the military's involvement. There are reasons for this not mentioned in his blog. In the NM case, Brazel described a large quantity of debris that was spread out over a large area. This was far more than one might find from a single weather balloon and reflector. Additionally, the source of the Circleville reflector was known by some officials in the area. The Thunderstorm Project had arrived in the area with some fanfare in early 1947 and began operations in May at the Clinton County Army Air Force Base just fifty miles from Circleville. They had been launching these balloon/reflectors into thunderstorms on a regular basis by early July and the local military/civilian authorities were probably aware of what was happening. Meanwhile, the 509th had little or no contact with the activities of the NYU team prior to July 8th. As I point out on pages 18 and 19 of this issue, there is no good evidence presented that Blanchard and Marcel were even familiar with the ML-307 reflectors in the photographs.

MEA CULPA!!!

It was pointed out by Kevin Randle that I got James Bond Johnson's name wrong in my Roswell issue. Somehow I began writing his name as Jay Bond Johnson (I have spelled it out that way on my web site as well). Johnson and I exchanged e-mails about a decade ago before he passed away so there really is no good excuse I can offer. I apologize to his family and friends for the error and am working on fixing the web site. The SUNlite errors will remain because I don't think it would be right to cover up the mistake

Rendlesham

Astronomy

I know I rehashed this back in SUNlite 2-6 but Jerry Cohen's recent missive regarding Rendlesham made me feel that there needed to be a more in depth discussion about the astronomical issues related to the Rendlesham case. Mr. Cohen seemed to lack the basic understanding on the subject and I knew that his arguments would be presented as factual by those wanting to promote the case. As a result, I present the following, which demonstrates his arguments against astronomical explanations for some of the events are specious.

Bright Fireballs and how they are reported

It is not uncommon for people to misperceive a bright meteor as a crashing aircraft. The April 25, 1966 fireball was full of news media reports (as well as reports to project Blue Book) from people stating they saw it as an airplane crashing. To the right is a story that appeared on page 1 of the Wellsville Daily Reporter on April 26, 1966. The fire chief's statement indicated they received many calls of apparent fires caused by the fireball, which was misidentified as a crashed plane. A more recent incident occurred in the United Kingdom on September 21st, 2012. There were comments about airplanes crashing and the meteor being just overhead or disappearing just beyond the trees in various press reports.

The 1983 MUFON field investigators manual recognized this problem:

Although sometimes seen over an area of a thousand or more square miles, each observer of a "fireball" may have the impression that it is passing closeby or that it landed a few blocks away, etc. "Fireballs" can appear as huge brilliant fiery balls, disks, or, as elongated teardrop shaped objects. They are described by observers as being "large as the moon," like "a plane crashing," etc.¹

This mirrors the comments made by Allan Hendry in his UFO handbook:

Meteors were described as various shapes, and of all angular sizes but usually less than "four." Descriptions have included "downed planes," missiles, fireballs, half-moons, comets, teardrops, "swept-wing jets," cigars, spheres, saucers, sparklers, and sometimes formations of individual lights (as the meteor breaks into pieces in the earth's atmosphere).

The meteors were reported both with and without trails; when noted they were sometimes seen as "sparks" or "pieces falling away."²

The British Astronomical Society documented the appearance of a very bright fireball at 2:50 AM local time on the morning of the 26th that was as bright as the Gibbous moon. This kind of fireball would cast shadows onto the ground and be quite spectacular. There is little doubt that this event did occur and coincided very closely to the initial report by Burroughs and Steffans, who were on patrol near the east gate. According to Halt's memo,

It's a Bird, a Plane, Holy Stars--a Meteor

By MICKEY MARTELLE
Comfortably seated at the Municipal Building covering a Village Board meeting this writer was snapped fully awake by the wail of fire sirens followed by a call saying there was a report of an airplane crash behind the Air Preheater plant on the Andover Road.

Jumping into the car we joined in the caravan of fire-fighters, engines and ambulances screaming their way over East State Street searching for the crash.

After a few miles went by and Elm Valley loomed on the horizon the equipment pulled up to the side of the road and was met by three pre-high school children who swore that the plane had crashed into the side of a hill just above them. They saw it smash into a grove of trees.

The hill ran straight up. This writer joined in the mad rush up the hill that had everyone bushed after traveling 10 feet, and searched through the grove, for the flaming wreckage. Nothing.

After returning to town this writer went by the Community Building where the fire equipment was returning to the stalls. People stood in bunches. They talked. One would guess that everyone in town saw the meteor.

Frequently one could see a person at the edge of the crowd hanging on every word being uttered by a witness to the phenomenon. Minutes later this same person would be the center of a crowd describing in minute detail just what it was he "saw."

Enough people from all portions of the town described the sighting exactly the same to make the thought of a hoax impossible. Oddly, no one mentioned the possibility of a flying saucer.

A check with the state police barracks and the local police department showed both were swamped by telephone calls as were the radio station and newspaper office.

Some of the witnesses and how they described what they saw follows.

Fire Chief Scores Unnecessary Calls

Wellsville Fire Chief Robert Prescott this morning issued a stern warning to the public not to call the fire number at the Water and Light plant to inquire about fires.

He said that the plant received 15 calls during Monday night's meteor passing and warned that idle curiosity could cost a person's life should a real fire call come in to find a busy line.

The chief said that fire information may be received by calling his office in the Community Building — 553-4998.

Edwin A. Olmstead of Belmont, former operator of the Allegany County Fire RadioControl and an avid birdwatcher was pursuing his hobby at Amity Lake when he spied the streak in the sky. He described it as a "ball of white fire at first, like a magnesium flare which then became greenish like a copper burn trailing smoke."

The object finally burst into red lines according to Paul Button who was in the same area but who witnessed the meteor from a different vantage point. Olmstead, upon arrival home figured the speed required to cause burning by air friction and theorized that the meteor traveled approximately 1,000 miles during the seven second that he saw it cross the sky.

Fred S. Jeselsohn of 74 East State Street, Wellsville, was at Foster Lake. He said he saw the object in the direction of Alfred. He described it as being bluish-green, trailing pieces of flame. He said it looked like metal burning and that he thought it was a plane in flames. He saw it extinguish within seconds.

On and on it went. The American public may be blasé about modern improvement and wonders but a display of celestial splendor is still one of the wonders of all time.

Christmas Crackers

Those astronomers observing on Christmas night, 1980, may be forgiven for thinking they had overdone the Turkey and Christmas Bidding. Roy Panther discovered his Comet (1980u) in the constellation of Igru, early that evening, and three (possibly four) fireballs were reported.

The first object occurred at 17.20 UT (± 2 minutes) and was of magnitude -5. It was widely seen over Southern England and brightened and faded smoothly, with no fragmentation or anomalous behaviour. The duration of this event was only a few seconds, and from Sussex, the object first appeared near Beta Aurigae and travelled towards the southern horizon, extinguishing in Eridanus.

Two other fireballs, both of only a few seconds duration, were sighted at 19.20 UT (± 5 minutes), and at 02.50 UT (± 5 minutes) on Boxing Day. The first of these was only reported by 3 witnesses (all non-astronomers) and the second by 4 witnesses, all of whom estimated its brightness as comparable to the gibbous Moon and of 3 to 4 seconds duration. Further observations of all these objects are required.

Without doubt, the most spectacular and best observed event was of major interest. It occurred at 21.08 UT, and was a fireball of extremely long duration and showing considerable fragmentation, followed by eventual total disintegration. It has been identified as the re-entry of the third stage of a Cosmos rocket launcher, and observations were made over most of Southern England, the track passing across the English Channel from near the Cherbourg peninsula, south of the Isle of Wight and running close to both

they thought an aircraft had come down in the woods just like the many witnesses to other fireballs over the years. Once that impression was given, any lights in the woods would be considered possibly related. Lights that may have been always visible but never noticed suddenly appeared suspicious.

With that in mind, why does Jerry Cohen dispute this hypothesis? He states that the meteor would have to explode over the lighthouse to give the impression that the lighthouse and meteor were related. This is a rather poor argument since the lighthouse was difficult to see from the east gate. There were too many trees between that location and the lighthouse. Cohen fails to understand that all the meteor had to do was disappear in the vicinity of the treeline to give the impression that an aircraft had gone down in the woods in the direction of the light house.

Cohen lists 13 questions regarding the meteor report. He focuses on the color red because of an early interview of a guard, who appears to be Larry Warren, has the color of a light exploding being red. We are not even sure Warren is even discussing the fireball and he appears to be discussing the second night's events! To answer the questions that Cohen has problems finding out for himself, the summary by the BAA does not list any colors but Richard Bertolino stated it was "blue-green" in color. However, his report was based on a decades old memory and may not be accurate.

The problem with color is that different observers can report a bright fireball different ways. The recent September 3, 2012 fireball visible in the Midwest (mostly Texas) had many descriptions of the color that varied. Some of the colors listed were "red/orange", "gold-colored fragments", "Bright white", "Bright blue", and "Bright green glow". This is evidence that one can not dismiss the meteor explanation based on a color difference between two reports.

Mr. Cohen also wonders if the meteor was reported in the papers or if it was photographed. A meteor that early in the morning usually does not receive much media attention (especially with the Cosmos rocket re-entry visible over the UK the evening before received a lot of attention) but the BAA did record it and that is adequate to prove that a bright meteor had been seen. No photographs exist because there was no meteor photographic network in Britain at the time. Mr. Cohen also has a problem understanding that most fireballs do not produce meteorites and, assuming it were heading in an eastward direction, any fragments would have fallen in the ocean.

In his final question, Jerry Cohen asked if anybody mentioned "a flaming or glowing tail"? This seems to be a poor question because witnesses do not always mention a meteor having a "tail". Very few of the descriptions of the September 3, 2012 fireball in the American Meteor Society's database described a "tail". I suppose what Mr. Cohen is referring to is the tail end of teardrop shape SOME meteors tend to exhibit. I would never describe a fireball in such a manner but that is because I am an amateur astronomer. I would describe an ion train or debris trail if one existed but never described the meteor as having a tail. In my opinion, Mr. Cohen seems to have never read many fireball reports. The point of the matter is that people report what they want to report. Just because they failed to mention seeing a "tail" on a meteor, does not mean they did not see one. It is interesting to note that Mr. Bertolino did mention a tail in his statements regarding the fireball he saw.

Stars misperceived

Jerry Cohen also seems to have problems on understanding that Halt was observing these objects through a night vision scope. The optics on this kind of device were not designed for observing stars and tend to distort points of light. Back in the late 1980s, a friend of mine had a surplus night vision scope that we used for video recording meteors. The image on the next page shows a frame from a video recording of the Geminid meteor shower in 1988. Notice how the stars not in the center of the field of view are distorted/warped. Additionally, bright stars at the center are "enlarged" by the image intensifier and do not appear pinpoint. In this image, the optic is focused. If the focus was slightly off, the images would be more distorted. Halt's descriptions of the objects being "elliptical" using his 8-12 power lens seem to be a fair description of the stars one sees in this example. He may have even been slightly out of focus.



Allan Hendry's experience involving witnesses who used optics on stars demonstrated that even normal optics could make stars appear to take on exotic shapes:

Yet, the great majority of IFO cases where optics were brought to bear involved stars. Usually, this problem occurred because the atmospheric distortions that attracted the attention of the unaided eye were simply magnified even more by the binoculars or telescopes. If a star were seen to flash different colors like red and blue, they only became more vivid through lenswork...Binoculars, working in conjunction with the atmosphere, created shapes out of stars in many of the reports....A star that was watched for three solid hours became a "domed disc," and other stars became "pentagons," "cones," "triangles," and so on.³

Halt not only described odd shapes for these objects but also mentioned sharp angular motion. Mr. Cohen picks up on this and implies that it eliminates the idea he was observing stars:

Although I've been an avid star-watcher ever since my own incident many years ago, I have never seen stars move quite in the manner Halt describes.

I have seen them appear to vibrate slightly and/or flare at times, but never with "sharp, angular motion"; especially with the naked eye. In any case, if a movement of anyone's eyes were responsible for this, all the stars would most likely move together with this sharp angular motion; not just one star.⁴

Cohen's argument about motion completely ignores many factors. Halt was using a hand-held optic in cold weather, which might result in unsteady images. Additionally, we have to consider the effects of auto-kinesis, which would take effect as Halt stared at these specific stars with the naked eye.

While Jerry Cohen states that he has never seen stars perform these maneuvers, he is apparently unfamiliar with witnesses who have perceived this kind of motion in the past. According to Allan Hendry, the following statements about motion were made by witnesses who mistook stars for UFOs:

Witnesses have "seen" stars:

****dart up and down (many cases)*

****wiggle from side to side (many cases)*

****zigzag*

****execute loops and figure eights (many cases)*

****drift "like a pendulum" - cases 450 and 1086*

****rise like a "leaf falling up" for two hours - case 329*

****ascend and descend in steps (one case)*

****meander in square patterns...even in an A shape*

*Fluctuating light or flashing colors have made many witnesses think that the star is rotating. **Also many have equated the rapid dim-***

ming and brightening of scintillating stars with back-and-forth motion. The key here is the claim that this “motion” lies fortuitously along the witness’s line of vision. (my emphasis)⁵

The bolded statement is important because this is the kind of motion Halt described with the object to the south. He stated the light was coming towards him and then returned back to the same location in the sky. Is it possible these scintillation effects caused Halt to believe that Sirius was approaching him from the south, only to reverse direction?

Cohen also argues with Ian Ridpath’s evaluation of a case from Spain being Venus:

*I do not know much about that case but I do have to ask the following: Anyone who has ever had a star “cause glare in your eye (without using binoculars or telescope) and give the impression of spurious shapes and extensions” to the point you would think it was a space ship, please raise your hand. Anyone who has seen Venus look like it has “descended to 7 to 8 meters above your car and then lowered landing gear,” also please raise your hand. Finally, anyone that thinks this specific methodology used to explain a case containing this type detail at the cost of intelligent, rational reasoning is truly scientific and that it will help us to learn anything about the case, please.*⁶

Once again, Jerry Cohen seems ignorant of Hendry’s evaluation of UFO cases. Hendry described how people severely misjudged distances of stars giving distances of 100 to 1,000 feet in nine cases. He also mentioned how they described the shapes stars in various ways:

*Included among these shapes are: discs and discs with domes (“Like two plates put together”- case 332; “elongated, as big as a distant plane”- case 377; “dome on top and bottom” - for one and a half hours in case 332), domes, a “plate with a hole in the center,” vertically oriented small triangles, ovals, a football ...even “teacups,” “Mexican sombreros,” and “bananas as large as the moon, shrinking back down to a star.” People have seen “spikes,” beams,” “appendages,” and sparkles shooting out in all directions from bright stars.*⁷

All of these descriptions are something that Cohen implies are impossible. It seems that he is just not very knowledgeable about the common descriptions made by witnesses, who mistake stars and planets for UFOs.

Jerry Cohen’s final argument has to do with the “beams” shooting down to the ground by what was probably the star Sirius. While Cohen claims that Halt stated he positively saw the beams shoot down, he ignores the initial statements by Halt in all of those descriptions, where he stated that it “appears” to be shooting beams down towards the ground. Later on Halt simply comments that the beams are being still shot towards the ground. This was his perception of what he saw. Is it just a coincidence that the brightest star in the sky, Sirius, was in the same area of the sky as his UFO?

A final clue that Halt had misperceived stars comes from an interview he conducted with Jenny Randles regarding the two objects to the north:

*These objects (in the north) seemed to persist and would not go away. We decided it was time to go back to base... the objects were still in the sky - however, it was getting light and they were getting faint.*⁸

This description is exactly what one would expect from what the bright stars, Deneb and Vega, would have done that morning. Because they were low in the northern sky and almost circumpolar, they would have remained in the Northern and Northeastern sky the entire time. As twilight came, they would have simply faded away.



Amateur astronomers educate the public about the various things visible in the night sky. Can UFOlogists say the same thing?

Star watching UFOlogists vs amateur astronomers

Recently, Nick Pope was quoted as saying the following about astronomers and UFOlogists:

Unless they've studied the phenomenon, astronomers are no more qualified to talk about UFOs than ufologists are to talk about, say, titanium oxide production in K-type stars. It's like marine biologists and oil company executives saying they understand each other's fields because they're both looking for something in the sea. The sea is about the only thing they have in common. So it is with astronomers, ufologists and the sky.⁹

What Pope, and other UFO promoters, miss here is that astronomers are the ones that understand the night sky the best. Statistics show that UFO reports are most likely to occur at night, which means their opinions are important. Their experience with observing the night sky and seeing various nocturnal phenomena makes them far more qualified than UFOlogists, who are mere "avid star watchers". UFOlogists, who may not have an adequate knowledge of astronomy, often allow their personal beliefs to affect their interpretation of the event instead of recognizing the potential mistakes that are made. In my opinion, this is the case with all of those individuals promoting the Rendlesham event.

While a good astronomical background with experience is necessary to fully appreciate Ian Ridpath's explanation, it only takes a bit of reading and research to understand it. Jerry Cohen's article appears to be more of a desperate effort to prop up the Rendlesham case and less of an effort to properly research or understand Mr. Ridpath's proposed solution. Like the lighthouse explanation for the flashing light, the meteor and stars explanation seem to be perfectly plausible for the observations made during those two nights in December of 1980.

Notes and references

1. Fowler, Raymond E. MUFON Field Investigator's handbook. Mutual UFO Network. Seguin, Texas. 1983. p. 60
2. Hendry, Allan. The UFO Investigators Handbook. London: Sphere Books Ltd. 1980. p.42
3. *ibid.* p.196-7
4. Cohen, Jerry. The Rendlesham forest UFO case - Another perspective. Available WWW: <http://www.cohenufo.org/CombinedRendlesham.htm#ObservationRelan>
5. Hendry, Allan. The UFO Investigators Handbook. London: Sphere Books Ltd. 1980. p.26
6. Cohen, Jerry. The Rendlesham forest UFO case - Another perspective. Available WWW: <http://www.cohenufo.org/CombinedRendlesham.htm#ObservationRelan>
7. Hendry, Allan. The UFO Investigators Handbook. London: Sphere Books Ltd. 1980. p.28
8. Randles, Jenny. UFO Crash Landing? London: Blandford 1998. p.123-124
9. Speigal, Lee. "Lord Martin Rees: Aliens Fascinate Everyone, But Only Kooks See UFOs". Huffington Post. 19 September 2012. Available WWW: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/19/lord-martin-rees-aliens-ufos_n_1892005.html

Brazel debris field imagery

Last year, Frank Kimbler made some interesting announcements about his work at the Roswell debris field. In one instance, he mentioned that some of the debris he recovered was proven to be extraterrestrial in origin. However, later examination of the data indicated this comment by him did not take into account the margin for error in the analysis, which I pointed out in SUNlite 3-5. I also mentioned a LANDSAT image he presented that had me confused:

The Landsat image is hard to figure. There is no exif data or information of where the photograph was obtained. We don't know the location and one has to wonder why a photograph that was taken by a satellite launched in the 1970s would show something when aerial photographs taken only a few years after the incident showed nothing. Is this a new crashed spaceship location or is it the Brazel debris field? It is hard to draw conclusions without more information and it seems that Kimbler is holding back.

Was Kimbler holding back or did he have the smoking gun?

The debris field over four decades

In the book, *The Roswell Dig Diaries*, professor Bill Doleman produced two aerial images showing the debris site in 1946 and 1954. According to Dr. Doleman:

Both the November 1946 and February 1954 aerial photography were acquired in stereo-pairs, thus allowing inspection through a magnifying stereoscope designed for just such viewing, which exaggerates topography and makes non-natural features more easily detectable....No linear trace that is visible in the 1954 aerial photographs, but is not visible in the 1946 photographs, was found during inspection of the aerial photography. Thus, no evidence of a furrow-like feature that was present in 1954, but not 1946, was detected in the aerial photograph study.¹

Examining those two images and two others from 1982 and 1986 seems to indicate there is little change in the area for forty years. The photograph in 1986 seems to have the same major features as those in 1946. Any effort to hide a gouge would have also affected the features the gouge had crossed. Either, the men at Roswell Army Air Field were experts at hiding the gouge or there never was one.

The top two images comes from the book, *The Roswell dig diaries*. The bottom two images I downloaded from <http://glovis.usgs.gov/>. The scaling is a bit off but one can see the same sinkhole features throughout the landscape in all of the images. Any differences appear to be lighting/seasonal related.

Recall that one can still see the impact mark of "Article 123" (the third A-12 test aircraft built) on Google earth, which occurred in May of 1963. Despite a documented effort to hide that crash site, the USAF/CIA were unsuccessful in doing so.

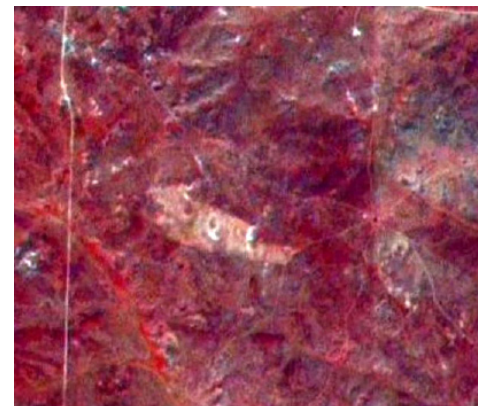
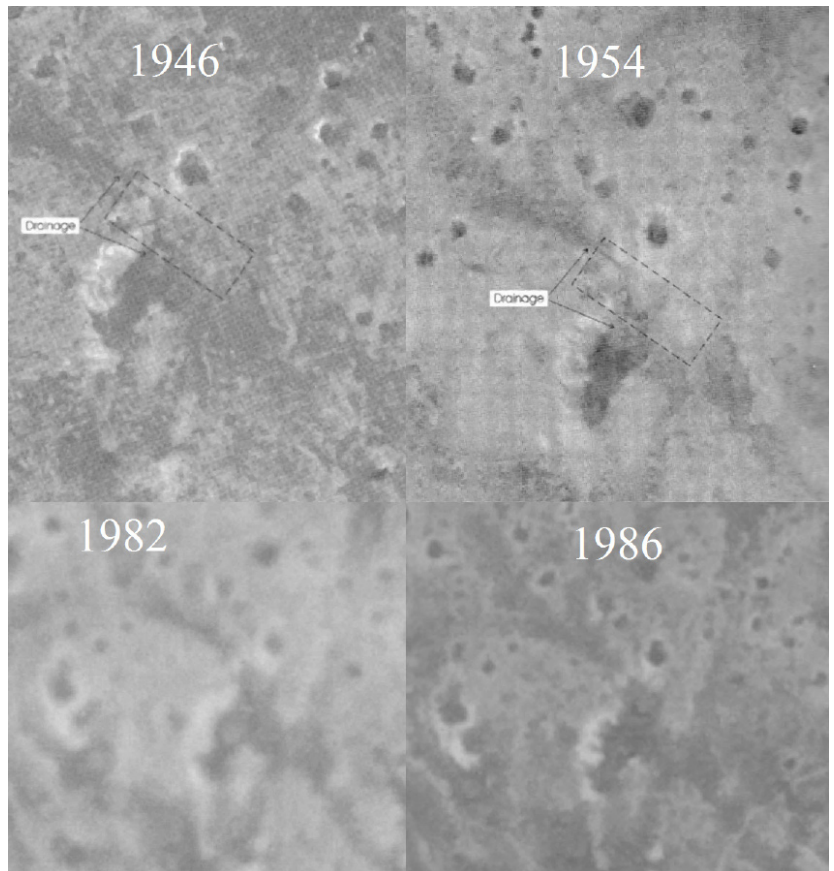
What year was Kimbler's photograph from?

In his open minds interview, Frank Kimbler described downloading satellite images and processing them to reveal a startling find (See image to right):

I manipulated the satellite imagery to enhance infrared and show areas where the ground was disturbed....this area that shows up, this disturbed area, is right smack dab over the top in exactly the same direction that witnesses had talked about.²

As I pointed out last issue, Kimbler seems to have missed the interview of Jesse Marcel, where he clearly stated a NE to SW direction vice a WNW to ESE direction. So, his direction ignored testimonial evidence offered by one of the principle witnesses.

I also have concerns with his claims about photo manipulation. I am not sure how he manipulated the infrared end of the spectrum using photo processing software unless



he is using infrared images to begin with. He gave no description on how he obtained the image or how he processed it.

Kimble presented this image to Open Minds and the "Chasing UFOs" team. However, he never mentioned a date for his photographs. All the images in the LANDSAT database are dated and labeled clearly so I am not sure why he seemed so secretive about it. The best time frame Kimble gave occurred in the Open Minds interview, where he blurted out that the feature appeared *"Maybe from the late 90s early 2000...it might even have been before that..."*³ One wonders why Mr. Kimble could not be more specific. Didn't he look to see when the feature first appeared or did he just find one image and then proclaim he had found something unique?



I had attempted to locate his image last year when the Open Minds article first appeared but missed this vital clue of "when" to look. Because I could not locate it, I assumed his location was some place other than the accepted Brazel debris field. However, I was focusing my search in the early 1990s and 1980s. Little did I realize that I was looking at the right place but the wrong time.

1998???

Thanks to an anonymous SUNlite reader, we may now know the rest of the story. In early September, I received an e-mail from them with images showing what they had discovered regarding the Kimble images.

The attached images revealed that the feature was visible in the area of the accepted location from the Brazel debris field but first appeared in 1998! Following this individual's guidelines, I downloaded images from the Landsat 5 satellite database at <http://glovis.usgs.gov/>. The following images were downloaded:

LT50320371998173XXX01.JPG

LT50320371998173XXX01_TIR.JPG

LT50320371998189XXX01.JPG

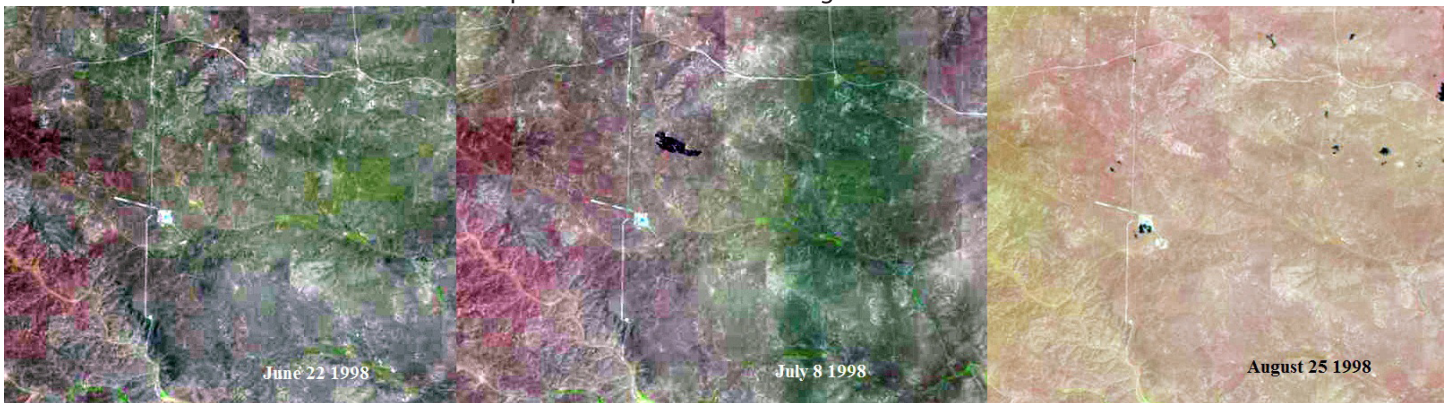
LT50320371998189XXX01_TIR.JPG

LT50320371998237XXX01.JPG

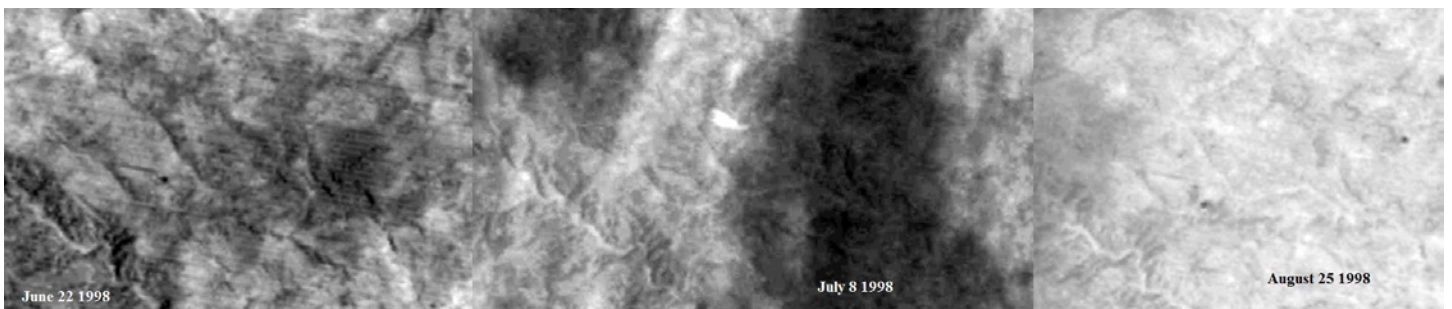
LT50320371998237XXX01_TIR.JPG

What all these numbers mean is that they were taken by Landsat 5 on path 32 row 37. The julian date was 1998 and the days were 173, 189, and 237, which translate to June 22nd, July 8th, and August 25th.

After downloading the images, I then cropped the desired area, ran auto levels in photoshop and then performed an auto adjustment in the curves function. The resultant sequence of "natural color" images can be seen here:



Even more interesting was what the thermal images (the images labeled as TIR) show:



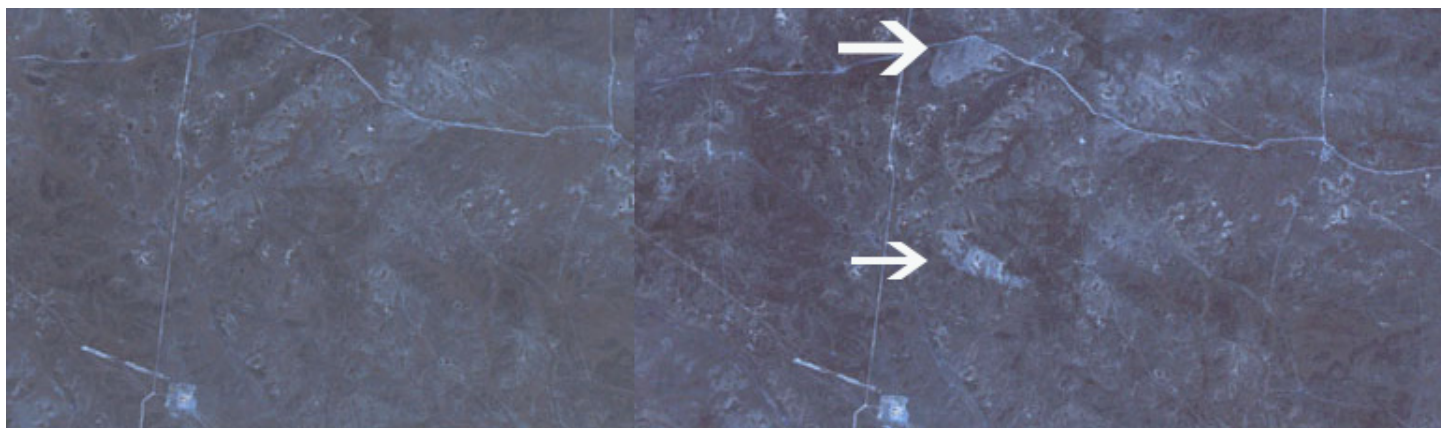
Notice the bright spot that corresponds to where the feature appears in the July 8th TIR image. To me, this indicates the area was radiating heat at the time. It seems reasonable to conclude that this feature came from a controlled burn designed to remove shrubbery.

There is no indication of the feature in either of the June 22nd images. I looked through several images in years prior to this and it was not evident in any of them. Over the years after 1998, the feature faded with each subsequent year. It seems that we can therefore conclude that the feature was created between June 22nd and July 8, 1998. Because of the thermal image brightness, I would assume it was closer to the July 8th date.

I also chose to download the Multispectral images from the LANDSAT MRLC collection (MRLC/MTBS Reflectance set) for 1998 and 1999. The original images are labeled:

5032037009812550_REFL.tif (left) - May 5, 1998

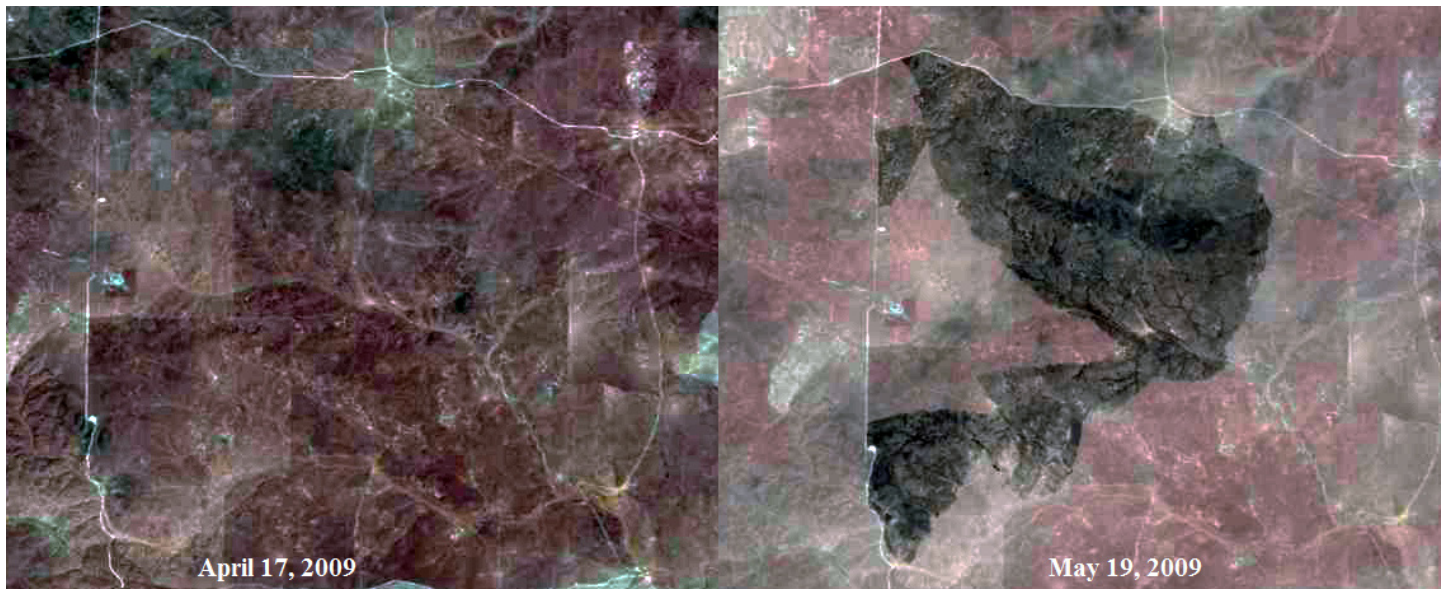
5032037009911250_REFL.tif (right)- April 22, 1999



I cropped the images and did adjust the contrast/curves in these images to enhance the features. One gets similar results using the tasseled cap images. However, the band 6 and Normalized Burn Range images did not show this feature. In the reflectance images above, you can see another area that had been apparently burned at the crossroads above the "feature" (top arrow). Does this mean there was alien spaceship debris here as well or does it mean this is nothing unusual?

Just routine?

Prescribed or controlled burns are not unusual for New Mexico. They happen often enough and it appears this area is not immune to frequent burns. I found another feature in the same general area on May 19, 2009. It was not visible on the 17th of April image indicating it had recently been created. Is it possible those who performed the burn in 1998 came back in 2009 to finish the job?



Hide, melt, or alter.....

Kimble seems to think this controlled burn was done to hide the evidence of the crash. He only suggested this in the Open Minds interview but was more confident about it in the "Chasing UFOs" episode. He stated that he thought it was meant to either hide the material, melt it, or alter its properties. Is this speculation valid?

The first suggestion was that it was to hide the evidence. A controlled burn would actually reveal small bits of metallic debris since the shrubbery would have been removed by the fire. Unless Kimbler thinks the heat of the brush fire would vaporize the metal, it seems unlikely this would work. This brings us to his other possibilities. Is Kimbler actually suggesting that somebody thought it was possible to remove any evidence of the “indestructible metals” used in an alien spaceship by using a simple brush fire? I don’t think a controlled burn can reach the temperatures necessary to alter an alloy (unless it is something like Bronze) or melt metals. It takes some really intense heat to alter modern man-made alloys like Stainless Steel. One wonders how an alien spaceship could survive the rigors of space travel if a simple brush fire could melt or alter the properties of the metals used in its construction. Additionally, even if the metal were melted/alterd, I do not think the isotopic ratios would be affected. The idea of using a brush fire in 1998 to hide evidence of an alien spaceship crash in 1947 seems ludicrous in this light.

Other than wild speculation by Kimbler, there seems to be no reason to consider this feature is some product of a sinister conspiracy that, after fifty-one years, suddenly wanted to hide any evidence that might still be present. When one looks at the evidence objectively, one can conclude that this was most likely due to routine burning.

More of the same

Is Frank Kimbler allowing his “will to believe” to affect his objectivity in his investigation? In the Open Minds interview, he stated that he “wanted” to find some debris. When you “want” to find things, you probably are going to do so. You will interpret imagery to suit your beliefs and allow you to make proclamations that you have discovered extraordinary things instead of the more mundane possibilities. In my opinion, Kimbler’s approach to revealing what he discovered has hurt his credibility. If he felt he had something earth shattering, he should have gotten his “ducks in a row” and published it in a scientific or UFOlogical journal (or the internet) with all the details listed instead of trickling out the information in a manner that was elusive. Like many of the other Roswell authors before him, he did not present all the information so others could evaluate his work or did not look beyond what he wanted to find. While the name has changed, the methodology involved in Roswell research pretty much remains the same.

While the “feature” that appeared in the summer of 1998 is interesting, there is probably a more reasonable explanation for it than the one Kimbler is pitching to people. In my opinion, this “feature” can best be described as a coincidence and not really related to any crash of an alien spaceship.

Notes and References

1. Doleman, Willam H., Thomas Carey, and Donald Schmitt. The Roswell dig diaries. New York: Pocket Books. 2004. P. 212-3.
2. “Interview with Frank Kimbler.” Open Minds Radio. July 11, 2011. Available WWW: <http://www.openminds.tv/radio/radio-archives/frank-kimbler-july-11-2011/>
3. *ibid*.

...an inclination to **MAGNIFY**...

Recently, Jesse Marcel's military evaluations have become a hot topic of discussion...again. . While my experience only extends back to the late 1970s and enlisted evaluations, it does give me some insight on how military performance was commonly graded. Reading some of the arguments that have been presented, I noticed that there was a lack of understanding/knowledge about how to read military evaluations/awards and some inaccurate conclusions are being drawn from them.

Is everybody a superior performer?

The military evaluation system is a tricky thing to understand. This has a lot to do with each command liberally interpreting the guidelines that were laid out in the instructions. One must remember that each command would want all their officers and enlisted men, who were not substandard performers, to have as good, or better, chance in being promoted. It basically became a competition between the commands on who could write the evaluations in such a way that even their mediocre officers/enlisted men could be promoted. As a result, there was an escalation effect in grades. A person, who should receive average marks got above average marks, above average performers obtained excellent scores, and excellent personnel had scores that were maximum value. I experienced this during most of my military career until the instruction was changed to limit the number of personnel who were graded with higher values.

Apparently, the Navy was not the only service that suffered from this problem. This RAND document describes the grade inflation being across the services and in officer evaluations.

In a competitive environment, performance evaluations often become inflated. Inflation over time has long been universal across the services and common to performance evaluation systems in the private sector as well. With inflated grading, the language used to describe the officer and his/her performance takes on paramount importance; an example is the difference between an "excellent" officer (not quite up to snuff), an "outstanding" officer (a good officer), and the "best officer in his/her year group" (an outstanding officer).

According to the officer managers we interviewed, the competitive assignment and promotion system and the inflation in performance evaluations have led to a widespread perception that a "zero-defect" career is needed to be successful. Performance that is reported as being less than outstanding is seen to doom a career, even at lower ranks when officers are learning and might be expected to have room for performance improvement. Officers who make mistakes or run into serious problems may feel they have little opportunity to learn from their mistakes in such a system. Though detailers and selection board members are quite adept at interpreting the performance evaluation "code" in inflated evaluations, from time to time the services find it necessary to "reset the system" by introducing a new performance evaluation tool.

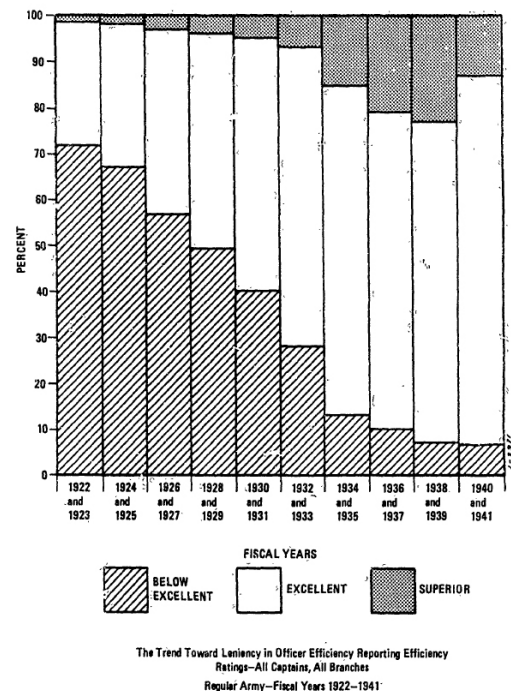
We were also told that young officers often take some time to correctly interpret performance evaluations. An "excellent" officer who has received two or three Bs among the A grades may not realize that his or her performance is actually being rated below average. As officers gain more experience in reading and interpreting performance evaluations, it is not unusual for them to provide input to their performance evaluation. This input may range from a list of job accomplishments all the way to a complete draft of the performance evaluation.¹

There is plenty of evidence that the US Army (which would include the Army Air Force) had this problem before and after World War II. This graph to the right shows how grade inflation trended prior to the war.² Such inflation was so bad that it became difficult for the army to figure out what officers were truly worthy of promotion to the next rank.

I can see this grade inflation problem in all my early evaluations. A good example is my E-6 evaluations in 1984. There were seventeen First Class Petty Officers aboard my submarine. Thirteen of us were graded with a maximum score of 4.0 (see image on the next page where the red arrow denotes the row showing the distribution of grades) while the other four received the next lowest score of 3.8. Nobody was graded lower than this!

When I began to write evaluations for my junior petty officers a few years later, I don't recall ever rating an individual less than 3.6 (on a 4.0 scale) unless they had received formal punishment of some kind. I found grading the individuals in a manner that was fair very difficult. I wanted to make sure they received the proper score but not to the point they would not get advanced. As a result, most received 3.8 or 4.0 marks, with my top performers receiving 4.0s. Evaluation grading, writing, and interpretation was something of an art form.

Were Jesse Marcel's grades inflated? There are clues to this based on how he was ranked against other Majors in his command. In the case of the May 1948



U-146 ENLISTED PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT

1 NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE OR NICKNAME INITIAL) PRINCE, TIMOTHY J		2 RATE/RATING ETS CSS		3 SSN	
4 BRANCH/CLASS USAF		5 STATUS ACTIVE		6 GRADE MAJOR	
7 MEMBER'S SHIP OR STATION USS LAFAYETTE CSSN 633 BL		8 MEMBER'S DUTY 30133		9 DATE REPORTED 05/02/00	
10 OCCASION FOR REPORT PERIODIC		11 PERIOD OF REPORT 03/01/00		12 DATE OF RATE 04/01/00	
13 TYPE OF REPORT PERIODIC		14 TRANSFER		15 OTHER	
16 FROM 03/01/00		17 TO 04/01/00		18 EFF DATE OF RATE 04/01/00	
19 CON- CURRENT		20 HEIGHT AND WEIGHT/PHYS. QUAL. 5'7"		21 RESERVE PART	
22 REPORTING SENIOR'S NAME (LAST AND INITIAL) HERREIRA, H F		23 RANK CDR		24 TITLE CO	
25 EVALUATION SECTION * REQUIRED COMMENT		26 NOT OBS		27 4.0 3.8 3.6 3.4 3.2 3.0 2.8* 2.6* 2.0* 1.0*	
28 27-MILITARY KNOWLEDGE/ PERFORMANCE		29 28-BASIC KNOWLEDGE/ PERFORMANCE		30 29-INITIATIVE	
31 30-RELIABILITY		32 31-MILITARY BEHAVIOR		33 32-PERSONAL BEHAVIOR	
34 33-HUMAN RELATIONS (INCL. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY)		35 34-SPEAKING ABILITY		36 35-WRITING ABILITY	
37 36-DIRECTING		38 37-COUNSELING		39 38-MANAGEMENT (E-7/8/9 ONLY)	
40 OVERALL EVALUATION		41 SUMMARY		42	

Section VIII. OVER-ALL RELATIVE RANK FOR RATER ONLY

The number of officers in this grade rated by me at this time is **4**. If these officers were arranged in order, considering overall future usefulness to the Army, from highest (No. 1) to poorest, this officer would be No. **3**.

Section IX. AUTHENTICATION

I certify that I have read the current AR 600-105 and that all ratings are made in accordance with instructions contained therein, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries contained herein are true and impartial.

SIGNATURE OF RATER: *[Signature]* SIGNATURE OF INDORSING OFFICER: *[Signature]*

NAME, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION OR UNIT: **W. H. BLANCHARD, Colonel, USAF, 509th Bomb Wing (WH), WAFB, Roswell, N. Mex.** NAME, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION OR UNIT: **THOMAS J. DUBOSE, Colonel, USAF, 509th Bomb Wing (WH), WAFB, Roswell, N. Mex.**

OFFICIAL STATUS OF RATED OFFICER WITH RESPECT TO RATING OFFICER: **A-2 of Wing which I command.** OFFICIAL STATUS OF RATED OFFICER WITH RESPECT TO INDORSING OFFICER: **A-2 of Wing - Chief of Staff**

evaluation (the one after the Roswell incident that is promoted as evidence he did not find a balloon), Marcel was ranked three (red arrow in image above) out of four (blue arrow in same image) This indicates that he was not the top performer despite being the only Major, who was directly involved in retrieving the debris from a crashed alien spaceship! His scores (see the image to the lower left), while above average (as laid out by the form), were obviously not as good as the others in the command. The command's evaluation system was very likely suffering from grade inflation and trying to indicate Marcel's scores as something exceptional is not accurate.

Who is Jesse Marcel?

One point that appears to be ignored in Marcel's May 1948 evaluation is the remark made by Colonel Dubose (see image of

Marcel's evaluations to the lower left):

*I personally do not know this officer. However, I have the utmost confidence in the rating officer's ability. I concur with the rating officer's comments.*³

Why would Dubose make such a comment when he was discussing an officer, who less than a year before, demonstrated great initiative when he recovered an alien spaceship? Such performance would have been well known in classified messages to higher headquarters. Dubose could easily have stated he was familiar with Marcel and that he was an outstanding officer. Instead we get this standard comment that probably was reserved for officers, who did not stand out. Dubose either forgot who he was or saw no reason to give Marcel anything more than a standard endorsement. This would have been the case if the events of early July 1947 involved a simple case of mistaken identity and not some earth shattering event that made Marcel a household name in the upper chain of command.

EFFICIENCY REPORT

See AR 600-105 for details.

Section I. OFFICER REPORTED UPON

Use typewriter or print in ink. Use carbon paper to fill out Section III at same time. See AR 600-105.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	INITIAL	GRADE	ARM OR SERVICE	COMPONENT	PERIOD OF REPORT
MARCEL, JESSE		A	MAJOR	USAF	USAFR	FROM 1 Jul 47 TO 30 Apr 48
UNIT, ORGANIZATION AND STATION		PRIMARY MOS	DUTY ASSIGNMENT (MOS CODE)	DUTY	LEAVE	OTHER NON-DUTY
509th Bomb Wing (WH), WAFB, Roswell, N. Mex.		9301	279	20	6	
DATE OF REPORT		FOR REPORTS RENDERED BECAUSE OF PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION, SUPPLY ADDRESS OF UNIT AND INSTALLATION WHERE OFFICER WILL REPORT				
6 May 1948		Semiannual report, paragraph 6c (4) (a-d)				
NAME, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION OR UNIT OF RATING OFFICER		NAME, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION OR UNIT OF INDORSING OFFICER				
W. H. BLANCHARD, Colonel, USAF, 509th Bomb Wing (WH), WAFB, Roswell, N. Mex.		THOMAS J. DUBOSE, Colonel, USAF, 509th Bomb Wing (WH), WAFB, Roswell, N. Mex.				

Section II. DATA AND SUGGESTIONS FOR USE IN ASSIGNMENT

NOTE: Information on this page will be forwarded to the Career Branch of the Personnel and Administration Division by TAG after ratings have been determined. Proper future assignment and utilization of the officer will depend upon the care with which information in this section is formulated and reported. Use typewriter or print in ink.

A. DUTIES ACTUALLY PERFORMED ON PRESENT JOB. To be supplied by Rater. Be specific. Give his duty assignment and all additional duties with enough specific detail to show scope of job in each area. **Dubose comments**

A-2, 509th Bomb Wing

B. DESCRIPTION OF OFFICER RATED AND COMMENTS. These paragraphs should cover physical, mental, moral qualities of rated officer, specialties of value to the Army, and any special defects or weaknesses affecting his ability to do certain assignments.

COMMENTS OF RATING OFFICER: A quiet, mature field grade officer. Exceptionally well qualified in his duty assignment. His only known weakness is an inclination to magnify problems he is confronted with. Superior moral qualities.

COMMENTS OF INDORSING OFFICER: I personally do not know this officer. However, I have the utmost confidence in the rating officer's ability. I concur with the rating officer's comments.

C. ESTIMATED DESIRABILITY IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES. Assume you are a commander of a major unit in war. Indicate to what extent you would want the rated officer to serve under you in the next higher grade in each type of duty described below. Place an X in the proper box, using the shaded NA area if the duty is not applicable. If line 6 is used, specify the nature of the specialty.

RATER	1	2	3	4	5	INDORSER	1	2	3	4	5
NA						NA					
1. Represent your viewpoint and make decisions in your name at a higher headquarters.											
2. Command a unit immediately subordinate to you on a combat mission.											
3. Be responsible in an emergency calling for initiative, coolness, forceful leadership.											
4. Work on an assignment requiring great attention to detail and routine.											
5. Plan all aspects of a military situation, using judgment, initiative, and coolness.											
6. Carry out an assignment in a civilian component such as ROTC, NG, or ORC.											
7. Represent you where fact and ability to get along with people are needed.											
8. Work on an assignment as specialist or technician. (Specify)											
9. Carry out the duties of the type of work to which he is now assigned.											
D. IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT. Be specific.											
RATER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSIGNMENT (MOS CODE)	9301 Wing staff officer					INDORSER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSIGNMENT (MOS CODE)	9301, Intelligence Officer				
RATER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER TRAINING	None at present					INDORSER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER TRAINING	Air Command and Staff School				
E. ENTRIES ARE BASED ON	INTIMATE DAILY CONTACT	FREQUENT OBSERVATION OF THE RESULTS OF HIS WORK	INFREQUENT OBSERVATION OF THE RESULTS OF HIS WORK	ACADEMIC RECORDS	OFFICIAL REPORTS						

A public relations fiasco?

Roswell proponents often state that Jesse Marcel should have been reprimanded in his evaluations if this was a case of mistaking weather balloon materials for a "flying disc". I would expect this kind of argument from people with no military experience but any military veteran would know better.

In my twenty-two plus years of military service, I have never seen an adverse evaluation on somebody who made an innocent mistake. Isolated events, unless they resulted in official military discipline, normally do not make it into evaluations. I can think of at least a half-dozen instances in my military career, I made "mistakes" (including several instances of insubordinate behavior towards officers and senior petty officers). None of them appear in my evaluations.

Probably one of my worst "mistakes" involved some direction I gave one of my technicians on how to perform some routine maintenance while the ship was underway. Unfortunately, I was not fully aware of how the test meter would affect the operation of the equipment. My technician's actions (based on my advice) resulted in an abnormal reactor condition that required operator action and a mandatory report to Naval Reactors via the chain of command. I accepted blame for the incident and was orally reprimanded for it. The incident did not reflect well on the command and the commanding officer. One would think that such an embarrassment would result in some negative remarks in my evaluations or a written reprimand of some kind in my service record. I signed no such

1616-1

ENLISTED PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT

1 NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE OR MIDDLE INITIAL) **PRINTY, TIMOTHY J** 2 RATE **ETC (SS)** 3 COW

4 ☒ USN 5 ☐ USNR 6 STATUS ☒ ACTIVE 7 ☐ INACTIVE 8 ☐ TEMAC 9 ☐ ACCORDA

10 MEMBER'S SHIP OR STATION **SSN-719 PROVIDENCE** 11 MEMBER'S DUTY **21029** 12 DATE REPORTED **8 APR 98**

13 ☒ PERIODIC 14 ☐ TRANSFER 15 OTHER 16 FROM **10 OCT 01** 17 TO **91 SEP 98**

18 ☒ REGULAR 19 ☐ CONCURRENT 20 PHYSICAL READINESS **P/20** 21 RESERVE PART 22 DATE OF RATE **8 AUG 98**

23 REPORTING SENIOR'S NAME (LAST AND INITIALS) **SIEVE, G L** 24 RANK **CDR** 25 TITLE **CO** 26 COW

EVALUATION SECTION *REQUIRES COMMENT IN BLOCK 56	NOT OBS	SCORES									
		4.0	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.0	2.8*	2.6*	2.0*	1.0*
27 MILITARY KNOWLEDGE/PERFORMANCE		X									
28 RATING KNOWLEDGE/PERFORMANCE		X									
29 INITIATIVE		X									
30 RELIABILITY		X									
31 MILITARY BEARING		X									
32 PERSONAL BEHAVIOR		X									
33 HUMAN RELATIONS INCL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY		X									
34 SPEAKING ABILITY		X									
35 WRITING ABILITY		X									
36 DIRECTING		X									
37 COUNSELING		X									
38 MANAGEMENT (E-7/8 ONLY, NOT FOR E-6 AND BELOW)		X									
39 OVERALL EVALUATION		1									
40 SUMMARY		9	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

41 ☒ ADVANCEMENT RECOMMENDATION 42 ☐ RECOM MENDED 43 ☐ PROGRESS TOWARD 44 ☐ NOT RECOM MENDED

45 SIGNATURE OF REPORTING SENIOR

46 ADDRESS OF REPORTING SENIOR
**USS PROVIDENCE (SSN-719)
FPO NEW YORK 09582-2399**

47 TYPED NAME AND SIGNATURE OF REGULAR REPORTING SENIOR ON CONCURRENT REPORT

48 DATE FORWARDED **91 SEP 98**
49 DATE TWO (IF 47 USED)

50 MEMBERS LAST NAME, INITIALS **PRINTY, T J** 51 GRADE **SS1** 52 PERIOD OF REPORT **30 SEP 98 TO 30 SEP 98** 53 TO **91 SEP 98**

54 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Assigned as Reactor Controls Division Leading Petty Officer and Engineering Department Enlisted Advisor on board the first Vertical Launch System 688 class fast attack nuclear powered submarine. Collateral duties include Ships Assistant Training Officer. Stands watch as Engineering Watch Supervisor underway and Engineering Duty Petty Officer in port.

55 SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS
Awarded fourth Navy Achievement Medal. Awarded National Defense Medal.

56 EVALUATION COMMENTS
ETC Printy is without hesitation is THE TOP CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ON THE SHIP. His aggressive leadership was the major factor in the success PROVIDENCE has enjoyed in the past year. He set the highest standards for himself and enforced them within his division to achieve superlative results. The specific accomplishments which continue to rank him HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE my other chiefs include:

- As Engineering Department Enlisted Advisor he consistently performed his duties at a level comparable to a Master Chief Petty Officer. He quickly established himself as the key in preparing for an up-coming ORSE by executing a rigorous training program which included both formal and casualty training. His outstanding planning and coordination directly resulted in the successful completion of three demanding upkeep and two unscheduled Drydock periods.

- Awarded a fourth Navy Achievement Medal for superior performance as Engineering Department Enlisted Advisor (EDEA). His forceful leadership as the KEY ORGANIZER, PLANNER and MENTOR in the Engineering Department directly resulted in PROVIDENCE's superior performance during an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination. This award directly reflected the training level of a virtually new and inexperienced Department that was only allotted a short time for preparation.

- As Reactor Controls Leading Petty Officer he led his division through months of demanding installation, repair and testing of many ship alterations. His involvement and dynamic leadership resulted in their completion ahead of schedule.

- As the ships Assistant Training Officer he reconstructed the ship's training program by rewriting all the ship's Training Requirements Pages (TRP), building a workable Long Range Schedule and constructing a valuable evolution and drill program. He has made training both interesting and productive for all, resulting in the highest level of operational readiness.

ETC Printy is the BEST CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ON BOARD. He actively attacks problems, counteracts their symptoms, and effects solutions through positive leadership and creative management. He continues to demonstrate a strong and vast technical knowledge. He has my STRONGEST RECOMMENDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT TO SENIOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER, retention in the Navy AND ALL PROGRAMS LEADING TO A COMMISSION.

In 8 months of operation, ETC PRINTY has broadened his horizons from LPO to Department LPO to ship wide training coordinator. His positive impact in training the crew has elevated ship to particularly high states of operational ability. He is the best chief I have worked with and is functioning as an E-9 Master Chief. Make him a Senior Chief now!

reprimand. About one month later, I sat down with the Engineer and signed my evaluations. I was mildly surprised to see that I had received across the board maximum scores and was ranked as the top Chief Petty Officer (out of 12) aboard USS Providence for that grading period! The commanding officer, whom I had embarrassed by my error, gave a glowing handwritten endorsement at the bottom of the type-written remarks. The lack of any mention of this incident in my evaluation had a lot to do with the fact that the Captain and Engineer were very satisfied about how I performed my job and it outweighed this isolated event. One can see a copy of my evaluations above as evidence of how I was graded. The red arrow marks the "overall evaluation" block, which indicates my ranking within the command. The incident itself was classified CONFIDENTIAL (all Nuclear propulsion materials are so classified) so I have no actual record of the incident to present.

Another example from my military file is something I am not particularly proud of during my last tour as the senior enlisted supervisor aboard USS Honolulu. In June of 1999, the department performed poorly on an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE), which is a major inspection used to evaluate the engineering department. We did not fail the inspection but were graded below average. Being responsible for the departmental training program, I was, in part, responsible for such a poor performance. At one point the Commanding Officer was discussing having me replaced after the inspection. He did give me a "second chance" but my performance evaluations suffered for that evaluation period. A copy of the evaluations are on the next page (the format had changed between 1991 and 1999). The red arrow marks that out of three E-8s on board, I was graded the lowest. The scores were in the "average" range with some scores graded in the "above average" category. The comments sections also were comparable to the scores with remarks that were basically generic statements indicating my scores were just "average". Having been a top performer most of my career, I was very disappointed to see the marks but felt they were accurate based on what had transpired. Despite these scores, the commanding officer, in block 40, still recommended me for a higher position (Command Master Chief -CMC/Chief of the Boat - COB) and officer programs (Chief Warrant Officer - CWO). These were my last evaluations prior to retirement in June of 2000. The department did perform better on our next ORSE in the spring of 2000 and, at my retirement ceremony, I received a Navy Commendation Medal (which is a very high award) for my tour of duty. Despite my deficiencies, the Commanding Officer felt it was something I should receive for all the hard work I had put in during my three years aboard USS Honolulu.

What this demonstrates is that military evaluations evaluate the individual over the entire period and not singular incidents that did not have any catastrophic consequences like equipment damage or the death/injury of personnel. To give poor evaluations for an isolated incident would be detrimental to the individual's career and the commanding officers often took that into consideration. My poor marks in 1999 had everything to do with how the training of the department was less than satisfactory over the entire year, which culminated in poor performance on an examination. Marcel's "public relations fiasco" was a singular incident that received little weight in his overall evaluation. This seems to have been overlooked by the proponents, who think he should have seen his

FITNESS REPORT & COUNSELING RECORD (E-7-06) RCS BUPERS 1610-1

1. Name (Last, First MI Suffix) **PRINTY, TIMOTHY J** 2. Grade/Rate **ETCS** 3. Design **SS** 4. SSN **21025**

5. ACT **ACT** 6. UIC **21025** 7. Ship/Station **SSN-718 HONOLULU** 8. Promotion Status **REGULAR** 9. Date Reported **97AUG01**

10. Periodic ☒ 11. Detachment ☐ 12. Reporting Senior ☐ 13. Special ☐ 14. From: **98SEP16** 15. To: **99SEP15**

16. Not Observed Report ☐ 17. Regular ☒ 18. Concurrent ☐ 19. Ops Cdr ☐ 20. Physical Readiness **P/WS** 21. Billet Subcategory (if any) **BASTC**

22. Reporting Senior (Last, FI MI) **RICHARDSON, J M** 23. Grade **CDR** 24. Design **1120** 25. Title **CO** 26. UIC **21025** 27. SSN **21025**

28. Command employment and command achievements:
Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) Certification-1; Tactical Readiness Evaluation-1; Western Pacific Deployment-6; TANDEM Thrust-1; Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination-1; Upkeep/Training/Local Operations-3

29. Primary/Collateral/Watchstanding duties. (Enter primary duty abbreviation in box.)
EDMC Engineering Department Master Chief-12. Responsible for the training, administration and operation of all aspects of the nuclear propulsion plant and auxiliary equipment. Supervises 57 men. Watch: (At Sea) Engineering Watch Supervisor-12; (Inport) Engineering Duty Petty Officer-12.

For Mid-term Counseling Use. (When completing FITREP, enter 30 and 31 from counseling record, sign 32.) 30. Date Counseled **99MAR15** 31. Counselor **HANEY, C D** 32. Signature of Individual Counseled

PERFORMANCE TRAITS: 1.0 - Below standards/not progressing or UNSAT in any one standard; 2.0 - Does not yet meet standards; 4.0 - Exceeds most 3.0 standards; 5.0 - Meets overall criteria and most of the specific standards for 5.0. Standards are not all inclusive. Meets all 3.0

PERFORMANCE TRAITS	1.0* Below Standards	2.0* Pro-Progressing	3.0* Meets Standards	4.0* Above Standards	5.0* Greatly Exceeds Standards
33. PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE: Professional proficiency and qualifications.	-Lacks basic professional knowledge to perform effectively. -Cannot apply basic skills. -Fails to develop professionally or achieve timely qualifications.		-Has thorough professional knowledge. -Competently performs both routine and new tasks. -Steadily improves skills, achieves timely qualifications.		-Recognized expert, sought after to solve difficult problems. -Exceptionally skilled, develops and executes innovative ideas. -Achieves early/highly advanced qualifications.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
34. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: Fairness, respect for human worth.	-Displays personal bias or engages in harassment. -Tolerates bias, unfairness or harassment in subordinates. -Lacks respect for EO objectives. -Interferes with order and discipline by disregarding rights of others.		-Always treats others with fairness and respect. -Does not condone bias or harassment in or outside of workplace. -Supports Navy EO objectives. -Contributes to unit cohesiveness and morale.		-Admitted for fairness and human respect. -Ensures a climate of fairness and respect for human worth. -Pro-active EO leader, achieves concrete EO objectives. -Leader and model contributor to unit cohesiveness and morale.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
35. MILITARY BEARING/CHARACTER: Appearance, conduct, physical fitness, adherence to Navy Core Values.	-Consistently unsat appearance. -Unsatisfactory demeanor/conduct. -Unable to meet one or more physical readiness standards. -Fails to live up to one or more Navy Core Values: HONOR, COURAGE, COMMITMENT.		-Excellent personal appearance. -Unsatisfactory demeanor or conduct. -Complies with physical readiness program, within all standards. -Always lives up to Navy Core Values: HONOR, COURAGE, COMMITMENT.		-Exemplary personal appearance. -Exemplary representative of Navy. -Excellent with outstanding PRT. A leader in physical readiness. -Exemplifies Navy Core Values: HONOR, COURAGE, COMMITMENT.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
36. TEAMWORK: Contributions to team building and team results.	-Creates conflict, unwilling to work with others, puts self above team. -Fails to understand team goals or teamwork techniques. -Does not take directions well.		-Reinforces others' efforts, meets personal commitments to team. -Understands team goals, employs good teamwork techniques. -Accepts and offers team direction.		-Team builder, inspires cooperation and progress. -Talented mentor, focuses goals and techniques for team. -The best at accepting and offering team direction.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
37. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT AND INITIATIVE: Taking initiative, planning, prioritizing, achieving mission.	-Lacks initiative. -Unable to plan or prioritize. -Does not maintain readiness. -Fails to get the job done.		-Takes initiative to meet goals. -Plans/prioritizes effectively. -Maintains high state of readiness. -Always gets the job done.		-Develops innovative ways to accomplish mission. -Prioritizes with exceptional skill and foresight. -Maintains superior readiness, even with limited resources. -Gets jobs done earlier and far better than expected.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

FITNESS REPORT AND COUNSELING RECORD (E-7-06) (CONT.) RCS BUPERS 1610-1

1. Name (Last, First MI Suffix) **PRINTY, TIMOTHY J** 2. Grade/Rate **ETCS** 3. Design **SS** 4. SSN **21025**

PERFORMANCE TRAITS	1.0* Below Standards	2.0* Pro-Progressing	3.0* Meets Standards	4.0* Above Standards	5.0* Greatly Exceeds Standards
38. LEADERSHIP: Organizing, motivating and developing others to accomplish goals.	-Fails to motivate, train or develop subordinates. -Fails to organize, creates problems for subordinates. -Does not set or achieve goals relevant to command mission. -Lacks ability to cope with or tolerate stress. -Inadequate communicator. -Tolerates hazards or unsafe practices. -Does not attend to welfare of subordinates.		-Effectively motivates, trains and develops subordinates. -Organizes successfully, solves problems as they occur. -Sets/achieves useful, realistic goals which support command mission. -Performs well in stressful situations. -Clear, timely communicator. -Ensures safety of personnel and equipment. -Routinely considers subordinates' and personal professional welfare.		-Inspiring motivator and trainer, consistently builds winners. -Superb organizer, great foresight, gets ahead of problems. -Leadership achievements dramatically further command mission. -Persuades through the toughest challenges and inspires others. -Exceptional communicator. -Makes subordinates safety-conscious, maintains top safety record. -Constantly improves the personal and professional lives of others.
NOB	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
39. TACTICAL PERFORMANCE: (Warfare qualified officers only) Basic and tactical employment of weapons systems.	-Has difficulty attaining qualification expected for the rank or experience. -Has difficulty in ship(s), aircraft or weapons systems employment. -Below others in knowledge and employment. -Warfare skills in specialty are below standards compared to others of same rank and experience.		-Attains qualifications as required and expected. -Capably employs ship(s), aircraft, or weapons systems. Equal to others in warfare knowledge and employment. -Warfare skills in specialty equal to others of same rank and experience.		-Fully qualified at appropriate level for rank and experience. -Innovatively employs ship(s), aircraft, or weapons systems. Well above others in warfare knowledge and employment. -Warfare skills in specialty exceed others of same rank and experience.
NOB	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. I recommend screening this individual for next career milestone(s) as follows: (maximum of two) Recommendations may be for competitive schools or duty assignments such as: LPO, DEPT CPU, SEA, CMC, CWO, LDO, Dept Head, XO, OIC, CO, Major Command, War College, PG School.					
41. COMMENTS ON PERFORMANCE: * All 5.0 and 1.0 marks must be specifically substantiated in comments. Comments must be verifiable. Bold, underlined, italic, or other highlighted type is prohibited. Font must be 10 or 12 Pitch (10 or 12 point) only. Use upper and lower case.					
* Capable Leader. Coordinated the training and maintenance efforts between the five Engineering Divisions. Directed the stowage and preservation of all departmental spaces.					
* Coordinated planning and execution of engineering and ship casualty drills. Stepped forward and took over the role of Ship's Drill Coordinator, providing excellent training to the crew through realistic simulations. Execution of tactical weapons situations was an important factor in the ship being judged a SUBPAC Tactical Readiness Top Performer.					
* Notable Planning Abilities. Efficiently organized and planned personnel rotations within the Engineering Department. Successfully planned Engineering Department's personnel augmentation for a Western Pacific deployment.					
* Executed and tracked an Engineering Department training plan for over 45 personnel. Identified level of knowledge weakness and ensured personnel received upgraded training in those areas.					
Promotion Recommendation	NOB	Significant Problems	Progressing	Promotable	Must Promote
42. INDIVIDUAL				☒	
43. SUMMARY		0	1	1	1
45. Signature of Reporting Senior					44. Reporting Senior Address
Date: 9/14/99					COMMANDING OFFICER USS HONOLULU (SSN 718) FPO AP 96667-2398
46. Signature of Individual Evaluated. "I have seen this report, been apprised of my performance, and understand my right to submit a statement." I intend to submit a statement. ☐ I do not intend to submit a statement. ☒					Date: 9/17/99
47. Typed name, grade, command, UIC, and signature of Regular Reporting Senior on					
Date:					

performance marks suffer.

Even if Blanchard was upset about Marcel's mistake and wanted to comment about it in his record. I doubt that an officer of Blanchard's caliber would give Marcel negative marks for a mistake he also made. After all, he was the one who authorized the press release based on Marcel's verbal report and after examining the debris himself. He was responsible for the "public relations fiasco". Blanchard would have been a poor commanding officer if he passed the blame onto Marcel in this instance.

It is also unlikely that upper chain of command would suddenly believe that Colonel Blanchard was incompetent based on some silly mistake that, as previously stated, caused no harm whatsoever. There was no public outcry in the media and editorials about how incompetent Blanchard was. There is no record that politicians demanded an investigation or that this was considered a "fiasco" by the military. Blanchard probably did receive a call and had to explain what made him issue the press release but that, more than likely, would have been the end of it. This minor incident probably was outweighed by his and the 509th's performance, which was where real leadership mattered.

Evidence of foul-up or cover-up?

The big question is, "Do the evaluations of Marcel prove or disprove that an alien spaceship or balloon materials were recovered?" The lack of any significant improvement in Marcel's ranking over the years in comparison with the other majors in his command indicate that, whatever happened in early July of 1947, had no positive/negative effects on his evaluations. Either the command did not want to recognize the extraordinary efforts of Marcel involving one of the greatest events in human history or it was a simple case of mistaken identity that was not worth mentioning anywhere and quickly forgotten.

Notes and references

- Hosek, Susan D., Peter Tiemeyer, Rebecca Kilburn, Debra A. Strong, Selika Ducksworth, and Reginald Ray. *Minority and Gender Differences in Officer Career Progression*. Rand Corporation. Online Internet Available WWW: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1184/MR1184.ch2.pdf p. 18
- Dilworth, Robert L. *Efficiency report inflation: A comparative analysis of U.S. Army and selected foreign military officer evaluation systems*. Fort Levenworth 1971. Online Internet Available WWW: <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/733385.pdf> p. 33.
- Jesse Marcel service record provided by Robert Todd.

“Drooling idiots” and “elite” units

One argument presented by the Roswell proponents, is that skeptics portray Jesse Marcel and the other officers of the 509th bomb group as “drooling idiots”. According to them, the unit was “elite” and could NEVER mistake the materials in the photographs at Fort Worth as being parts of a flying disc. An additional argument is that, if this were the case of mistaken identity, the Air Force would never promote a “drooling idiot” like Blanchard to General because he could not tell the difference between weather balloon materials and a “flying disc”.

The “elite” status of the 509th had more to do with the training of their air crews to handle and drop nuclear weapons. That elite status can not be transferred to other abilities. Each military unit is full of specialists, who are trained in a specific area so that the entire unit has the knowledge to do its job. It is up to the commanding officer to call for that expertise if he needs it. There is no evidence that any of the weather personnel were asked to look at the debris. We do not even know if any of them had training/experience with the ML-307s. Meanwhile, crashologists speculate that Blanchard or Marcel must have seen ML-307 reflectors before this:

- **They saw them in use on base.** There was no radar capable of tracking RAWIN target balloons on base in July of 1947. The base probably used the standard visual tracking with theodolites for their weather balloon launches. There was no need for the base to keep these items in stock if they were not going to use them.
- **They saw them in use at Kwajalein during “Operation Crossroads”.** RAWIN balloons were launched four times a day (at approximately 0300, 0900, 1500, 2100 local time) according to the Aerological report on Operation Crossroads. Half of these balloon launches were at night and the others were in the middle of the work day. There would be no reason for Blanchard and Marcel to take the time out of their busy schedule to go over to the weather observers area and watch a balloon launch. The perimeter of this horseshoe-shaped island is about three miles in length and their work offices/area could have been far away from the weather balloon launch area. Additionally, not all balloon launches had RAWINs. The one photograph of a balloon launch in The official photographic record of Operation Crossroads had no ML-307 attached (see below)! Stating they must have seen these RAWIN launches is just speculation and is not a proven fact.



- **Marcel’s radar training exposed him to RAWIN targets.** His training had everything to do with bombing targets from an airplane using the radar and not with tracking balloons. There is nothing in the training schedule that shows Marcel was exposed to ML-307 reflectors. (see below from Marcel’s service record provided by Robert Todd)

This is to certify that Major JESSE A. MARCEL, O-900753
has completed training in the Radar Intelligence Officers' Course, Class
15-B during the period 13 August to 8 September 1945,
as follows:

Subject	Hours Required	Hours Completed	Subject Grade	% Toward Final Grade	
<u>Basic Radar</u>				10%	
Lecture	11	11	89		8.9
AN/AIS-15A Set	6	6			
<u>Score Interpretation</u>	16	16	96	20%	19.2
<u>Radar Navigation</u>				15%	
Lecture	14	14	90		13.5
Supersonic Trainer	2	2			
<u>Radar Bombing</u>				20%	
Lecture	20	20	81		16.2
Supersonic Trainer	4	4			
Bomb Trainer	2	2			
<u>Target Study</u>	14	14	83	10%	8.3
<u>Mission Planning</u>				20%	
Lecture	10	10	88		17.6
Final Problem	10	10			
<u>Radar Countermeasures</u>	7	7	93	3%	2.79
<u>Aircraft Recognition</u>			90	2%	1.8
<u>Scene Photography</u>	2	2		--	

- **The passage of flight #5 miles about four miles south of the base in early June exposed Blanchard and Marcel to the activities of the NYU group at Alamogordo, which included the use of ML-307 reflectors.** Just because the flight passed south of base does not guarantee they knew about the NYU group or would make the connection to the debris that Marcel brought to Blanchard. There is no evidence they held meetings with the NYU group prior to July 8th and no evidence they were overly concerned about this balloon flight near their base. Ignored by these proponents is that flight #5 had no radar targets. So, even if Blanchard saw flight #5 in a pair of binoculars from the base (and there is no evidence he did), he saw something that was different than what was recovered by Marcel. We don't even know if Blanchard or Marcel were on base that day. According to the yearbook, the 509th was on field maneuvers at Wendover AFB from May 27th to June 13th.

These are the arguments presented to state that Marcel and Blanchard absolutely knew about ML-307 reflectors. None of them can be considered close to conclusive and are based more on speculation and wishful thinking.

In order to reinforce the argument, skeptics are accused of referring to the Blanchard and Marcel as "drooling idiots". This is not accurate and ignores the times in which this all transpired. In July of 1947, nobody really had any idea what a "flying disc" might be. There are no records of messages being sent out to various commands in early July 1947 describing what they were or how they were constructed. The only thing anybody knew about them appears to be from what the media was describing and speculating

about. Ignored by proponents is the article that appeared in the Roswell Morning Dispatch the morning Jesse Marcel presented the debris to Blanchard. This article described two discs that were found in Texas and that they were flimsy objects made of some foil just like the ML-307s in the Fort Worth photographs. They also stated the Army Air Force was investigating one of these discs. If somebody involved in the decision on what to do, had read this article, they might have drawn the conclusion that maybe they also recovered the remains of a flying disc.

Christopher Allan and Gilles Fernandez also raised the point that the 509th may have felt a need to issue some sort of press release since the local media was aware, or might become aware, that several people had gone out to the ranch to retrieve a "crashed disc". Unfortunately, the wording of the press release was unclear as to exactly what was recovered.

In order to reinforce the "drooling idiots" argument, it has also been stated that Colonel Blanchard could not be promoted to the rank of General because of the errant press release. This is a completely inaccurate portrayal of how the military would react to such a scenario. Other than a bit of embarrassment by jumping the gun on a press release, I see nothing seriously wrong that could jeopardize Blanchard's career or change the opinion of his superiors about him. Nobody was hurt, nothing was damaged, and no regulations were broken. Compare that to what happened to these two famous officers:

- Chester Nimitz grounded a destroyer as a young officer. A court-martial found him guilty of "neglect of duty". He was relieved of command and received a reprimand.

- Hap Arnold tried to petition congressmen to create a separate Air Force in 1926. He was publicly reprimanded by General Patrick, the head of the Army Air Corps and left Washington DC in disgrace.

Army Said Studying Object At Houston

Two 'Flying Discs' Said Found In State

By The Associated Press

TWO flying discs were reported to be found in Texas and a half mile west of Hillsboro, He said the discs were found in a field and that they were flimsy objects made of some foil just like the ML-307s in the Fort Worth photographs. They also stated the Army Air Force was investigating one of these discs. If somebody involved in the decision on what to do, had read this article, they might have drawn the conclusion that maybe they also recovered the remains of a flying disc.

The second flying disc was reported found by Bob Scott, a farmer living one and a half miles west of Hillsboro. He said the disc fell on his place Friday, and that it resembled a saucer. He said it was so bright he could not look at it very long.

He said he was afraid people might believe he was "going to extraterrestrial things" and he told his family about it.

That, he notified C. F. Klusick and Joe Gerick, Hillsboro, who went to the field and investigated. Most of it had melted, they said.

Gerick said one piece looked like **tin foil, but when he picked it up it appeared to be celluloid.**

'Discs' Said Found

(Continued From Page One)

observing, housing one of the largest airbases in the world, would advance no theory about what the discs might be, the paper said.

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Gerick said one piece looked like **tin foil, but when he picked it up it appeared to be celluloid.**

Cities Report Discs

Another development in Houston was a suggestion by Charles Odum, 23, Air Force captain in the last war, that the flying discs might be "crystal balls" similar to those he said were used by the Nazis.

He said these balls were electrically operated, and while in mid-air would send back to a radar screen on the ground the altitude, speed and other data of the disc.

He said he had never seen such balls, nor had he ever heard of them, although he made about 60 missions.

Col. Ryan said the U. S. now has a balloon sent aloft to gain such information. The balloon has a reflector on the bottom which is picked up by ground radar. He said they were made of rubber, but as they expanded they became opaque.

Army Said Investigating

For information, the commanding officer of Elington field, said he had been contacted by witnesses who said they had seen a flying disc on the Texas coast. He said he had been contacted by witnesses who said they had seen a flying disc on the Texas coast. He said he had been contacted by witnesses who said they had seen a flying disc on the Texas coast.

No Solution Is Found To Discs

By The Associated Press

The quest of finding "flying saucers" continues Monday in the state of Massachusetts and Vermont as searchers, the discs continued to swirl fully as rapidly as the others themselves.

Explorations of the phenomenon ranged from the theory that they were jettisoned flying machines sent aloft by U. S. military units to the suggestion that they might be merely sun light reflected on wind-blown sheets of paper.

Man Claims Invention

A. S. Crook of Chattanooga, Tenn., a 34-year-old welder, was announced by inventors the "Flying

An article that appeared in the Roswell Morning Dispatch on July 8th (the day that Marcel brought his debris into Blanchard's office), also appeared in the Lubbock Morning Avalanche on the same day. Highlighted are the descriptions of two discs that were recovered in Texas. They mention that the discs were constructed of tin foil or aluminum and that Colonel Warren, the commanding officer of Elington field, was asked to investigate by Washington.

Both of these men overcame these incidents (which were more severe than Blanchard's minor mistake) to become the great Admirals/Generals that they were. To suggest that Blanchard, who was an officer that was probably earmarked for promotion prior to the incident, be removed from the promotion list because of a simple mistake in public relations is ludicrous.

Contrary to what the crashologists state publicly, the skeptics do not consider the men of the 509th incompetent or stupid. Skeptics simply state that, in the excitement of the moment, Blanchard, Marcel, and the others involved thought they had recovered a "flying disc" since nobody had any idea what a "flying disc" was. It was an honest mistake that was probably treated as such by the upper chain of command with no repercussions. Those presenting the "drooling idiots" straw man argument are doing so in order to make their argument of a conspiracy involving a crashed alien spaceship sound more reasonable. If this is the kind of argument they are resorting to, they must not consider their evidence very convincing.

Flip-Flopping

Recently, Kevin Randle took me to task concerning the testimony of Thomas Dubose regarding “the switch” that supposedly had occurred at Fort Worth. He recognizes “the switch” is the cornerstone to the entire alien spaceship conspiracy theory and any suggestion it did not occur collapses the entire crashed alien spaceship scenario.

In my time line article (SUNlite 4-4), I laid out the situation in a short one page description. I pointed out how Jesse Marcel Sr. had stated on several occasions that he had brought the debris into General Ramey’s office and, at some point, the debris transformed into weather balloon debris. I did not want to spend multiple pages going over the various stories but Randle insists I was just cherry picking what I wanted and took the one statement by Dubose to Shandera (which I even identified as a controversial interview in the article!) as gospel while ignoring all the video and audio tape statements by Dubose. This is not exactly correct. I evaluated the evidence and thought I laid out my case why there was no switch. Since Randle seems to think I hid things from the reader, I now will lay out my case in far greater detail so Mr. Randle and his fellow crashologists can see where I reasoned there was no switch.



Jesse Marcel Sr.

Mr. Randle enjoys promoting the testimony of Johnny Mann, who interviewed Marcel back in the 1980s. He stated that Marcel told him that the photographs don’t show him with the actual debris. This was not recorded, which makes it just as good as the Shandera interview with Dubose and Moore’s description of what Marcel had told him. Kevin Randle frequently points out how William Moore’s interview had presented several versions of the interview he published in The Roswell Incident.

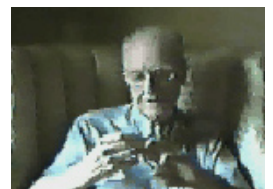
What Randle is not very fond of acknowledging are the other statements I quoted in SUNlite 4-4.

- Marcel was clear to Bob Pratt that he brought the debris to Fort Worth and gave it to General Ramey.
- Marcel was clear in the movie, UFOs are real, that the newsmen saw some of the debris. This tends to confirm the statement by Moore that Marcel said he was photographed with the real debris.
- Marcel was clear in his interview with Linda Corely that he had brought the debris into the office and that the debris was covered up BY HIM (under the orders of Ramey) with brown paper on the floor.

The later interview is important to examine because none of the photographs appear to show anything beneath the brown paper unless it was as flat as the floor. It is almost as if Marcel was trying to get himself out of the corner when the photographs showed that his memories of all of this were not accurate. More importantly, the last two statements completely invalidates the second hand testimony of Walter Haut, who told everybody that Marcel told him he went into the map room with Ramey and when they came back the real debris was gone and replaced with the balloon/reflector materials. Marcel never mentioned this in any of the interviews. Not surprisingly, Randle and Schmitt attempted to force fit statements by Dubose into this scenario.

Thomas Dubose

It is important to note that hypnosis was used on Dubose in their very first interview conducted by Randle and Schmitt. In his book, The abduction enigma, Randle cites the Royal College of Psychiatrists. According to Randle, they stated using hypnosis to recover memories can introduce false memories. Randle also made a note that memories are not repeated the same way twice and are influenced by one’s beliefs. Did hypnosis play a role in influencing Dubose’ memories and how he recalled the event based on leading questions by those conducting the interview?



In the MUFON journal of April 1991, Randle and Schmitt presented the testimony from Dubose in their interviews. The main points from these interviews were:

- Dubose stated the weather balloon explanation was a cover story to get the press off their backs.

- They were told to forget everything else.
- Two or three days prior to the Marcel showing up, the only debris that came from Roswell that Dubose ever saw was flown from Roswell to Fort Worth in a B-25. It was in a sealed bag, which he gave to Colonel Clark so he could take it to Washington in a B-26.
- Dubose never actually saw any of the debris from Roswell other than the sealed bag.
- Dubose had no idea where the debris in Ramey's office came from.
- Dubose stated the debris in the office did not come from Roswell.
- Dubose stated the debris from Roswell was a bunch of garbage.

According to Don Schmitt and Tom Carey, Dubose had also stated that the debris in the office *"couldn't have come from Fort Worth. We didn't launch balloons!"*¹

There was never any statement that he switched the debris or Ramey ordered a switch of the debris. If Ramey was going to order a switch, he would have turned to somebody he trusted to accomplish it in a secretive manner with no loose ends. His chief of staff, Thomas Dubose, would have been that person. Since he did not know where the debris came from, how can he state it never came from Roswell or that it had been switched? If the only time the "real debris" ever came to Fort Worth was on July 6th, what was on the plane that Marcel flew into Fort Worth? Is Randle actually suggesting that an empty plane came to Fort Worth or that there was some alien debris on it that Dubose was unaware of? When compared to what Marcel Sr. stated, Thomas Dubose statements in this interview are inconsistent.

However, the interview of Dubose with Shandera is consistent with most of Marcel's testimony. I must point out that Randle has implied that Shandera either made this all up or severely distorted what Dubose told him in order to make it fit Marcel's testimony. This is why I stated, in SUNlite 4-4, that the interview was controversial. Despite this caveat, one must still read the interview to see what was stated. The basic content of this interview revealed the following:

- There never was a switch and that neither he or Ramey would ever do something like this.
- The photographs show the debris that Marcel brought from Roswell.
- The weather balloon explanation was a cover story to get the press off their backs.
- He took the debris in Ramey's office, put it into a container, gave it to Colonel Clark, who flew the debris to Washington in a B-25.
- The debris in the office was not from a weather balloon because it did not have weather balloon markings. However, he described the debris as garbage.
- The debris from Roswell came in a B-29 and he had met the plane. He took the debris from that plane and brought it to Ramey's office.
- He could not remember if Marcel was on this plane or not but does remember Marcel being present at the press conference.

Shandera's track record regarding accuracy is not the best so one has to consider this when evaluating his version of events since he did not record it. However, Randle and Schmitt have also had problems with being accurate about what they wrote about Roswell. So their interpretation of what Dubose meant should also be considered as I pointed out above. What I found important about the Shandera interview was that Dubose was asked, point blank, if he or Ramey had switched the debris. Meanwhile, Randle and Schmitt seemed to dance around this or Dubose did not ever directly answer the question when asked.

Others interviewed Dubose but it is not clear what was stated. Randle points out that Don Ecker received two different stories from Dubose. The first was what he told Randle/Schmitt. The second came after Shandera called Dubose and "refreshed" his memory. Ecker then heard Dubose tell the story he told Shandera.

I have a CD-ROM called The UFO Anthology, which contains part of a Dubose interview that seemed to contradict what Randle and Schmitt have stated about the debris:

*Well, Butch sent this fella you mentioned his name... (Interviewer says "Marcel")...yeah...out to look at it and he scooped it up and put it in this bag and brought it back to Roswell...that went direct to Blanchard and from Blanchard into Fort Worth and then to Washington... that took less than 48 hours.*²

I am not sure of the interview's provenance but it clearly is Dubose talking. The description appears to confirm what Dubose told Shandera and contradict what he told Schmitt/Randle about the debris from Roswell that went to Washington. He is stating that this debris was the debris that Marcel had picked up and not something that came a few days before.

Another interview that was conducted came from Billy Cox. He got Dubose to say that they dropped a balloon from several hundred feet and that was the debris that is in the office. Dubose also told Cox that he did not think the debris came from an alien spaceship. An examination of the materials in the photographs indicate that this was something dropped from a few hundred feet is not accurate. The ML-307 would not shatter into hundreds of pieces and fragment. Additionally, the balloon material would not

turn this black even if the balloon had been left out for a few hours in the sun (see my balloon testing articles in SUNlite 4-4 and 4-5). Of course, how could Dubose know that the material had been dropped from a few hundred feet when he told Randle and Schmitt that he had no idea where that debris had come from!

Brazel's interview

There is no reason to repeat Mack Brazel's interview but it is important to note that his description involved rubber, sticks and paper backed tin foil. The photographs at Fort Worth show some of the same type of debris except he described larger quantities of it. This indicates the photographs show some of the debris Brazel and Marcel had recovered. As a result, crashologists invoke the conspiracy theory, where Brazel was forced to give this description. This argument ignores what I have stated in my SUNlite 4-4 time line.

- Bessie Brazel described the same types of debris in her 1993 affidavit.
- The early news wires described the disc as a small tin foil target.
- The FBI teletype suggests that the debris was a RAWIN target.
- Jesse Marcel is reported to have stated, in the 1947 media, that the debris consisted of tin foil and rubber.

Other than a lot of speculation and hearsay evidence, there is really no evidence that Brazel was forced to give this testimony. Brazel's testimony, supported by the other statements made in 1947, indicates the debris in the photographs came from the Foster ranch and was never switched.

Making sense of it all

Thomas Dubose and Jesse Marcel may have been describing events as best they could recall at the time they were interviewed. However, personal beliefs, the ravages of time, and the power of suggestion may have influenced those interviews. Dubose believed in most of the interviews that:

- The weather balloon explanation was a cover story for the press.
- The debris in the office was just a bunch of garbage.
- At some point he gave Colonel Clark some debris that was flown to Washington.

Assuming that Marcel was being accurate when he stated he had brought the actual debris into Ramey's office, the statements by Dubose about the debris in the office not being from Roswell or that the only debris from Roswell was the flight on the 6th must be inaccurate or a jumbled memory from the events that transpired on July 8th. The interview from The UFO anthology appears to confirm this point of view.

This is why I drew my conclusion that the debris retrieved by Brazel on the fourth was what was given to Colonel Clark for transport to Washington DC/Wright Field. Meanwhile, the debris Marcel had picked up off the ground on Monday evening was what came into Ramey's office. Dubose seems to have gotten confused about which debris was which. He knew the debris he gave to Clark was the "real stuff" but seems to have forgotten where the debris in the office came from in his interview with Schmitt/Randle. Shandera may have jogged some of those details loose by asking direct questions instead of letting Dubose ramble on.

Ignored or never mentioned by Randle in his complaints about this are the conclusions that Schmitt and Carey drew regarding the interviews with Dubose. In the Summer 2000 issue of the International UFO Report, they wrote the following:

In the interviews that he (Dubose) gave to researchers over the years several themes in his testimony were clear: (1) he never saw any debris other than weather balloon debris; (2) the debris was not switched (because all he ever saw was the balloon); and (3) the weather-balloon debris came from Roswell on the flight with Marcel.³

If it were so clear that Dubose stated there was a switch in his interviews, as Randle claims, how could Schmitt/Carey draw the conclusion there was no switch? Is it because, as I have stated, they never really asked the question or received an answer to such a question? It appears that what Dubose stated was open to interpretation, which makes Shandera's interview important. I only mentioned this interview because it was the only one published where somebody asked him that question directly.

My conclusion in the time line I published was not based solely on what Shandera says Dubose told him. It is a conclusion based on looking at the statements that were least likely to be contaminated by the popular Roswell legend and it does not require a complex conspiracy for which there is little, or no, supporting evidence.

Notes and references

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The UFO evidence: Under Review

This is the start of a new column where I examine one case from the 1964 document, The UFO evidence. Last issue I examined ten cases that I thought had potential explanations. This month, I chose to examine another case that had me wondering what really happened and offer a possible source.

NICAP's version of events

The UFO Evidence lists a case that occurred at an airport near Buenos Aires, Argentina. NICAP describes the event as follows:

At Ezeiza International Airport, Buenos Aires, December 22, 1962, a UFO was sighted about 3:00 a.m. Tower operators Horacio Alora and Mario Pezzutto were watching an Aerolineas Argentinas plane which was about to take off, and an approaching DC-8 jet operated by Panagra (a division of Pan American Airways).

One of the operators was radioing landing instructions when the jet Captain suddenly broke in:

"What's that thing at the end of the runway?"

An instant later, the same question came from one of the Argentine airliner pilots. Operator Alora turned and saw a large round object, glowing with an intense fiery light, at the head of runway 1-0-2-8. It had evidently descended while he and Pezzutto were watching the two airliners.

Because of the UFOs' brilliant glow, Alora could not tell whether it had actually touched down or was hovering just above the runway. At the moment he turned, the UFO rose about ten meters, hovering briefly. Then, rapidly accelerating, it took off on a northeast course. Before it disappeared, it was also seen by Operator Pezzutto.¹

While this description gives some particulars, it is hard to draw any conclusions based on this limited information. As a result, I looked elsewhere for additional data and discovered there were varying accounts of what happened. They could not even agree on the date, time, or the names of the witnesses!

Other sources

The Internet can be a valuable resource if you can find the source documents. When it comes to UFOs, that is usually hard to do. It seems that this case was researched based on newspaper clippings, and not much else. Even more astounding is how various individuals can interpret the same sources.

According to the UFOINFO web site, which sources Dominique Weinstein's "Aircraft UFO encounters":

December 22, 1962 - At three a.m. a large fiery disc was observed on the runway by two control tower operators and the flight crews of two aircraft at Ezeiza Airport, Buenos Aires, Argentina. The UFO rose to 10 meters altitude, hovered a short while, then flew off toward the northeast. (Source: Dominique Weinstein, Aircraft UFO Encounters, p. 33).²

When I checked Weinstein's sources, he cited the NICAP document, a Keyhoe book (Aliens from space), and the MUFON journal (December 1987). All of these sources seem to trace their information back to the NICAP document.

Another database is the Magonia database by Vallee'. He lists the case with a few details altered.

Dec. 21, 1962 0215 Buenos Aires Airport (Argentina). A large, fiery disk was observed on the runway by Horado Alora and Mario Pezzutto, the two control tower operators, and by the crews of two aircraft. It rose to 10 m altitude, hovered, and flew away to the northeast. (CODO-VNI 1962)³

For some reason, Vallee's database gives a different date and time. His listed source is, as best I can tell, is an Argentine UFO collection group. Is this more accurate?

To add to the confusion, the APRO bulletin of May 1963 listed something completely different. In that bulletin, underneath the headline "UAO LANDS AT BUENOS AIRES AIRPORT" is the following description:

At 12 p.m. on 23 December 1962, a glowing football-shaped object sat down on the runway at the Ezeiza International Airport at Buenos Aires, Argentina. Mr. Horacio Alora, a technician, and Jose Besutti, tower operator observed the landing of the unconventional aerial ob-

ject from the control tower. The object parked near section 40-28, about 2,000 meters (little over a mile and 1/5) from the control tower. Alora and Besutti described the object as flowing and football shaped.

At the time of the sighting, Besutti and Alora were controlling the landing of a Panamerican DC8, and paid special attention to the object during the landing of the plane. There was excellent visibility at the airport, and all facilities were functioning well, according to newspaper reports. When the object left, it ascended vertically at high speed, to an altitude of about 500 or 600 meters (about 1500 feet), then disappeared over the horizon in level flight.⁴

Now the time has shifted to 12 PM a day later. The section listed as 40-28 may be a typo for runway 10-28 listed in the NICAP document. Where did this information come from? We don't know.

Meanwhile, 1964's Flying Saucer Review No. 4 presented details that shed more light on the subject:

*On December 22, The Buenos Aires Papers reported that a day or so previously, a saucer had landed at 2:15 a.m. on one of the main runways of the International Airport at Ezeiza, near Buenos Aires. The machine had remained there, sitting on the runway, until disturbed by the arrival of a giant Pan-American DC8 passenger plane. The principal witness interviewed by the Press was Senor Horacio Alora, officer in charge in the Flight Control Tower. He said that he and his colleague Senor Jose Besutti had watched the intensely luminous UFO had landed right in the centre of the runway at a distance of some 2000 metres from the Control Tower. At that distance the object had the apparent size of a football. When it took off again, it went straight up to an estimated height of 500 or 600 metres, and then made off at vertiginous speed. He and his colleagues had in fact been getting ready to bring in the Pan-American DC8, and the behaviour of the UFO was consequently something that they had to watch most carefully. One of the Buenos Aires' newspapers pointed out, in commenting on this case, that such a landing on an important international airfield proved clearly that the saucers were no longer content to land merely in out-of-the-way places. They were now coming down boldly on the principal airfields of the country. The paper went on to say that the Argentine Air Force was busy collecting all available information about this and many other UFO landings.*⁵

This may help resolve the date and time issue. It is possible that NICAP used the date from the news paper and then assumed it was the date of the sighting. They also may have rounded off the time to about 3 AM. We really do not know.

At this point, I was beginning to become frustrated by an inability to get to the source documentation. It was Joseph Trainor's UFO roundup Number 15 that convinced me that whatever the source of their information was, it was not very reliable:

1962 ARGENTINA FLAP - "OVNI COMING IN FOR A LANDING!"

...On December 20, 1962, at approximately 2:15 a.m., radar operator Jose Besutti was staring at his scope in the Flight Control Tower at Ezeiza International Airport, just west of Buenos Aires. Suddenly, he saw an unidentified blip and contacted airport manager Horacio Alora. As the tower crew watched, the UFO landed right smack dab on Ezeiza's main runway.

Grabbing a pair of binoculars, Alora spotted a silvery disc-shaped UFO sitting on the runway 2,000 meters (600 yards) from the tower. An "hombrecito" (little man) climbed out and walked around on the asphalt as if it were a road. The UFO had flashing red and white lights.

Just then, the tower radio squawked, "This is Pan-Am 609 Heavy, nonstop jet service from Rio de Janeiro, coming in on final approach."

"Made de Dios!" Alora shouted, "Tell him not to land."

As one operator raced to the radio, the tower crew heard another transmission from the four-engined Pan American DC-8. "Ezeiza Tower, this is PanAm 609 Heavy. Just passing the outer marker."

Grabbing the microphone himself, Alora shouted, "PanAm, go around! Repeat, go around! Do not attempt to land."

"Passing the inner marker," the pilot said, "Jesus H. Christ! Who left that truck on the runway!?"

"That's no truck!" Alora shouted, "It's a flying saucer!"

Besutti and the others opened the tower windows and began yelling at the UFO occupant. "Get out of there! Hurry!"

The occupant simply stood there. Just then, the big jetliner dropped out of the overcast, lights on and engines whining. Startled by the sight of the DC-8 descending toward him, the occupant dashed back to the UFO. A hatch popped open in the bottom hemisphere, and he dove through it.

Suddenly, the UFO began glowing. As the DC-8 touched down, it rose to a height of 600 meters (1,980 feet) and then zoomed eastward

toward Uruguay “at a vertiginous (dizzying) speed.” Five seconds later, the DC-8 on its rollout rushed right over the spot where the UFO occupant had been standing.⁶

In this version the date is now the 20th of December and the details are for more explicit. The idea that an alien was wandering about on the runway and that the pilot could not abort his landing seems rather hard to believe. In Keyhoe’s version of events (Aliens from space), the plane went into a holding pattern! Trainor gave no source for where this information appeared. I can only assume that it was some UFO writer’s wild interpretation of the news paper clippings that were used by the other sources.

As you can see there seems to be a wide variety of dates and times associated with the event. Can one even offer a solution for this mish-mash of data?

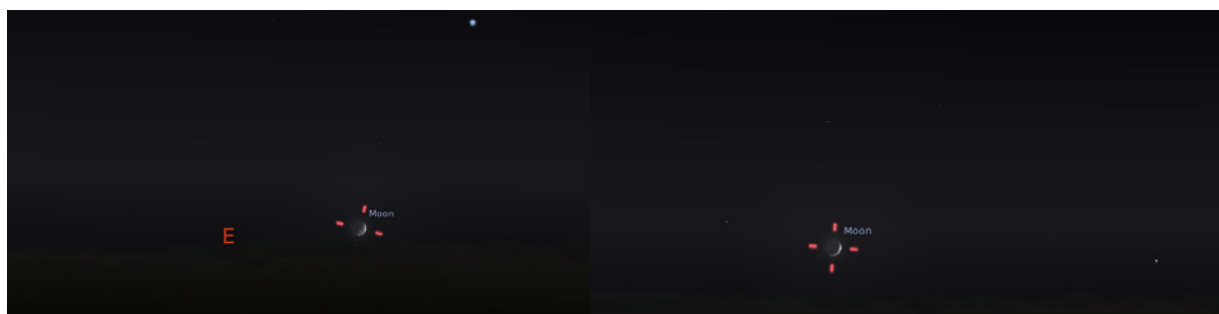
A potential solution?

At this point, I am not sure what details are correct. It appears that most of the information comes from newspaper accounts and there was little, if any, follow-up. In looking for a solution, I made the assumption that the most likely date of the event is the 21st or 22nd of December and the time involved was sometime around 2 or 3 AM.



The runway description of 1-0-2-8 seems to be an important clue in all of this since it gives a direction of observation. Runways are labeled based on the direction the runway points. Runway 1-0-2-8 pointed towards magnetic bearings of 100 and 280 degrees. So, the direction of observation was towards the east or west. For my potential solution, I will assume that they were looking in an eastward direction. Looking at Google Earth, we see the true azimuth for this runway is a value of 101-102 degrees (see left image). Was it possible that something astronomical might have been involved.

The moon rose around 2:25 AM (left image below) on the 21st and about 3 AM on the 22nd (right image below). In both cases the moon rose at a bearing of between 94 and 99 degrees azimuth, almost in line with the runway. Another possibility was that Venus rose around 3:25 AM at a bearing of about 107 degrees. Had there been fog or distant clouds low on the horizon, the moonrise/ Venus would appear briefly and then suddenly disappear as if left at great speed. Clouds or fog could also have distorted the moon’s shape so it was not readily recognizable. This is a working hypothesis but without better data, one can’t consider this a final solution.



The moon rising or setting in some clouds can be misleading under the right conditions

No solution does not mean an exotic craft was involved

Just because I can’t “solve” this one to my satisfaction does not make this very good evidence. The varied dates/times and descriptions invalidate that claim. It remains unexplained only because there is insufficient information and very little effort was made to

look any further than the sensationalist story that was presented.

Notes and references

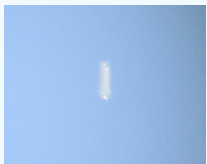
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A strange UFO

A UFO was sighted by an amateur astronomer in Virgie, Kentucky that was very interesting. Allen Epling photographed a UFO that was hovering over his home for several hours on the afternoon of the 16th of October. The pictures and video of the UFO with his 8-inch Schmitt-Cassegrain telescope showed an object that appeared transparent and seemed to be reflecting the sun along the edges.



Checking the MUFON database for this date revealed that the same UFO appears to have been observed in different locations many miles apart. If it were the same object, it was visible over an area of about 100 miles, which makes one wonder what it might have been. Several people have speculated on this being a balloon of some kind. Party and solar balloons have been proposed but I am somewhat skeptical of these explanations. Small balloons move pretty rapidly across the sky because of their low altitude even when the wind is not that fast. Additionally, the large area of observations indicates something at a much higher altitude.



Searching the MUFON database further, I found a report (with photographs) from the 15th in Lynchburg, Tennessee 250 miles to the southwest that appeared to be the same object. There was also a report from Huntsville, Alabama that seemed to be the same object. Another search revealed sightings in Cross Junction, Virginia and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania on the 17th of October. This was about 300 miles to the northeast of Virgie. If all of these reports were of the same object, the distance between these locations suggests a speed of about 10 mph in a northeast direction.

Radiosonde data (Nashville, TN and Blacksburg, VA) suggests the altitude of the object might have been around 20,000 meters (65,000 feet) if it were drifting with the wind. At this altitude, winds were from the west and southwest with speeds of 5-20 knots. This is consistent with the suggested flight path in the MUFON database. If this were the case, the balloon must have been a large research balloon of some kind. The altitude also explains why it was visible over such a large area. However, this shape is not something that one might expect from a research balloon, which is usually teardrop-shaped. Is it something new?

I had to see if there were any balloon launches that might have produced this object. There was the much publicized Red Bull Stratos flight on the 14th, where Felix Baumgartner parachuted from a height of about 128,000 feet. However, this balloon and capsule was recovered. Another possible suspect was launched from Fort Sumner, New Mexico on the 10th. The payload was recovered near Boise City, Oklahoma. Wondering if the balloon did not deflate and drifted away with the upper level winds, I contacted the Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility (CSBF) for a response. This seemed to be a plausible explanation and the absence of a payload would cause the shape of the balloon to change. As of November 1st, I have yet to receive a response.

We are left with something of a mystery here. If CSBF tells me that they recovered their balloon, it leaves us with some other source. Is it possible the military was flying a high altitude balloon that they did not want anyone to know about? Hopefully, I will be able to reveal more information about this UFO in SUNlite 5-1.

The 701 club

Case # 10693

Brad Sparks' listing of Blue Book unknowns gives the following description:

June 27, 1966. Pacific, 400 miles E of Wake Island (at 19° N, 172° E). 4 a.m. Radio Officer Steffen Sorensen, of the S/S Mt. Vernon Victory, saw a "cloud" expand with a light inside, then accelerate away.¹

The Blue Book file consists of several letters between Sorensen, Blue Book, and Dr. Hynek. While Major Quintanilla basically gave a standard thank you to Mr. Sorensen (along with asking him to fill out the standard UFO report form), Dr. Hynek sent a personal letter to him discussing his sighting among other things.

On June 27th, 1966, the ship S/S Mt. Vernon Victory was headed in on an easterly course away from Wake Island in the Pacific (location given as 19° N, 172° E). The witness, Mr. Sorensen, was called up to the bridge by the watch officer, Donald Rominger. He was aware that Sorensen was reading about UFOs and something was seen in the sky that might interest him. Sorensen arrived on the bridge to see most of the event. The sighting can best be described by the witness:

By the time of my arrival on the bridge, the cloud had grown to the apparent size of a golf ball held at arm's length and was moving either upward or towards the ship or both. Its position at the time was approximately dead ahead (ship headed about due east) with an elevation of perhaps ten degrees. From that time until the cloud became temporarily obscured by a "real" cloud some few minutes later, by which time it reached an elevation of perhaps 40 degrees and was about 20 degrees to starboard. I did not notice any outstanding characteristics beyond its luminescence, growth, and movement, and of course the flashing light at its center. On coming back into view two or three minutes later, it had by that time assumed the relative size of a six-inch ball at arm's length, had thinned out and permitted stars to be seen through it. The white flashing light as at this time still located within the expanding cloud.

It was at this time that an interesting fact became apparent. Most of the perimeter of the lower right-hand quadrant of the cloud was visible. Viewing through 8X30 glasses, I was struck by the perfect roundness of this sharply defined line, and thought immediately how this might resemble a shock wave radiating from a point source...Responsible for this impression was the fact of roundness, the fact of high contrast along the leading edge of the expanding cloud, and the fact of very rapidly diminishing intensity from the back edge toward the epicenter....

I wish I could say that all quadrants neatly fitted this description, but this is not so. Most of the upper semicircle was unobscured (sic) at this time, and seemed merely to blend gradually into the dark background. At about this time the flashing light, which I saw only as a flashing light and without form, accelerated southward from its cloud and was lost from my view shortly afterward....²

The duration of the sighting appears to have lasted many minutes. I would estimate about ten (possibly twenty) minutes based on his description.

The witness

The letters by Sorensen are very revealing about his mind set. Although, his account of the event seemed to be very objective, his personal views about UFOs and the USAF were made clear in the rest of his correspondence. The Radio officer, Sorensen, was a big reader of the NICAP UFO investigator and mentioned this in his letter to the USAF (which he also sent to NICAP). He also appeared to have the same opinion about Blue Book that NICAP had.

When completing the UFO report form by the USAF, he made numerous comments about Blue Book. He also added another letter that mentioned another organization (possibly NICAP since he sent them a copy of his sighting) that was aware of his sighting.

Two days ago I received a letter from an organization which heroically pretends to be an independent agency saying in part, "...a prominent scientist, checked on some facts for us and discovered that there was a rocket fired from Bikini Atoll within minutes of your sighting. Could you tell us whether you were anywhere near this island at the time or whether this is what you may have seen. I realize that some of your descriptions may not fit in with the rocket launching, but we would still like to know if it is possible that this is what you saw..." As your own organization may have been the source of this weatherballooning technique, I quote to you my answer that "At the time of the 27 June sighting, Bikini Atoll was roughly 110 degrees removed from the point at which the UFO first appeared on the horizon." This fact could have been established by means of a two minute expenditure of energy over a chart plot – yet my opinion of the fact was solicited by mail.³

While he was correct about the Bikini atoll being in the wrong direction, the originators of this letter may have sent the wrong information because there was a rocket launch that morning that probably was the source of this UFO.

The source of the UFO report

When I first looked into this, I only had the date, time and location. I had not yet read the Blue Book case file. Recognizing the location was near the path a Vandenberg missile test would take to Kwajalein, I immediately went to the Astronautix chronology to see if anything matched. One has to remember that Mr. Sorensen was at 172 degrees East or on the other side of the international date line. The time for his observation (0400 on June 27th) would equate to 1600 GMT/UTC/Z on the 26th.

The Astronautix database gives the following entry:

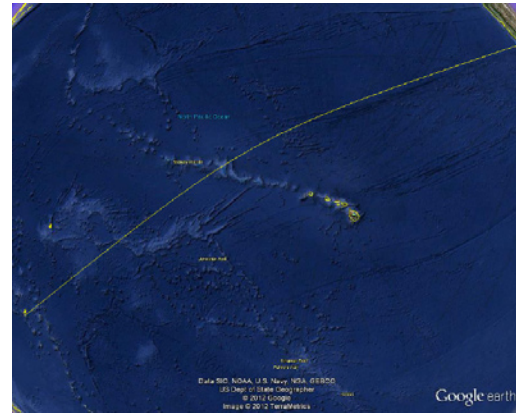
1966 June 26 - . 15:34 GMT - . Launch Site: Vandenberg. Launch Complex: Vandenberg 576B2. LV Family: Atlas. Launch Vehicle: Atlas D. LV Configuration: Atlas D 147D.

NTMP KX-20 re-entry vehicle test flight - . Nation: USA. Agency: USAF AFSC. Apogee: 1,800 km (1,100 mi).⁴

Assuming a transit time of 30 minutes, a rocket launched at 1534 GMT, would reach Kwajalein around 1604. This seems to match up with the same time as the sighting. With a maximum altitude of 1100 miles, it would have been visible to observers far away as long as the sky was dark enough.

By my computation, sunrise was about 6 AM for this position. Because of the rocket body's high altitude, the sun's light would probably have illuminated the booster tank and cloud of venting gas/debris that was surrounding it even though the crew of the Mount Vernon experienced dark conditions.

The flight path to the right is just an estimate but it shows how that the SS Mt. Vernon (Yellow peg to the left of the track in the Google Earth image to the right) was well placed to see the flight of the missile. The direction of observation, the description of the trajectory, and the coincidence of the launch time all indicate what Sorenson and Rominger saw was this missile test.



The SS Carl Schwedeman UFO sighting

One point raised by Sorensen was that he felt the UFO he saw was similar to that reported in NICAP's UFO Investigator (January-February 1966) by the crew of the SS Carl Schwedeman. This occurred on December 16, 1965 off the coast of California. The ship was heading NNW when, at 0207 on that date, and saw a bright light about three times the brightness of Venus surrounded by a "light-radiating cloud". A Minuteman missile had been launched around 1800 PST on the 15th (0200 GMT on the 16th) and was widely reported in the media. Assuming the Schwedeman (a British vessel) was using GMT and not PST, they probably saw the Minuteman launch. If this was the case, is it any surprise that Sorenson's UFO looked and acted the same?

Why didn't Blue book see the explanation?

I can think of several reasons why they did not explain this case. Sorensen's attitude and apparent affiliation to NICAP may have played a role. The last thing Blue Book wanted was negative publicity from some disgruntled individual, who wanted his case to remain unexplained. It is also interesting that this case remained "unexplained" despite the fact that Hynek noted that it was possible this was a rocket launch in his letter to Sorensen:

I presume that you have watched launching from Cape Kennedy, on television or live: have you ever noticed what happens to the exhaust from the rocket when the booster gets well out of the denser atmosphere? Instead of producing a long tail, the exhaust gases spread into a wider and wider cone, and when near-vacuum is reached, the cone flattens to a disc which then actually curls forward and forms a ball around the whole body of the rocket, moving, of course, with it. This ball is luminous, and expands with altitude. The rocket motor, still firing, is seen as a brilliant light at the center of the ball, when the point of view is behind the direction of acceleration.

The area of the Pacific where your sighting took place is known to be used for rocket experiments, both from this country and from others. There was, as you note, a rocket launched near the right time, only 110 degrees of longitude from your position, but I don't know anything about its trajectory. You were well within range of launching facilities all over the Pacific, including Vandenburg (sic) AFB in California.⁵

It seems Hynek did not bother to follow this up or share this with the staff at Blue Book. Maybe he had better things to do or the Blue Book staff wasn't really interested. We will never know for sure why the case remain unexplained but I suggest it was a mixture of fear of negative publicity, complacency, and limited staff/resources.

Case closed

I can't see any reason to reject this explanation for this UFO report. There are far too many coincidences to ignore. Unless somebody can present a valid counter-argument, I consider this one "Case Closed".

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Aren't You Forgetting Doorway Amnesia?

by Martin S. Kottmeyer

Those who recognize the expression, presumably understand it as part of the argot of alien abduction mythology, a bit of jargon showing you are 'in the know.' Offhand, I don't think there is a formal definition, at least I didn't run across any in my reading, but the term is perhaps self-explanatory. It refers to the observation that alien abduction narratives and experiences often skip over the moment where the abductee crosses through the entrance or exit of a flying saucer. One moment the victim is in her home lying on her bed looking at aliens, the next moment she is lying on the metal table with aliens preparing to do some horrific procedure on her.

Bullard's writings were where I first read the expression "doorway amnesia" and I lean to assuming he coined it. It was part of his summary paper of his abduction study.(Bullard 1987) There he offers a figure of 77 cases showing doorway amnesia in his collection of cases up to 1985. He offers it as a subtle correlation in favor of the objective reality of abductions – doorway amnesia has no practical logic; it feels seemingly pointless: "Yet that very meaninglessness bestows importance on an event when it repeats as often as this one. Its only reason to exist seems to be that the witness actually had the experience and reported it for the sake of accuracy even though he did not understand or see its purpose."

On p. 63 of his full formal study proper - UFO Abductions: The Measure of a Mystery - Bullard gives a figure of 32 cases showing doorway amnesia during the procurement phase, but he grants, "This number may underestimate the true prevalence of the effect." On p. 339 he gives another statistic stating 26% of his Top 50 alien abductions has doorway amnesia vs. 17% of All cases. On pp. 372-3 of this full study doorway amnesia is advanced as a point in favor of the objective reality of alien abductions. His argument there includes the thought that no investigator could lead a witness to give this trait, since it is too subtle to have been noticed widely. Many reports echo the symptom all the same.

Though Bullard can be credited as coining or giving weight to the expression, priority for discovering the trait unquestionably belongs elsewhere. I found it being identified as a recurring trait in abductions over a decade earlier in the context of an account of the Sandra Larson abduction. Quote: "As is often the case in these experiences, possibly because of the effect of the 'control,' Mrs Larson does not remember exactly how she entered the object." (Lorenzen 1977) Clark's write-up of the case in the October 1978 UFO Report notes Larson did not remember how she entered the craft, but does not allude to this being a recurrent feature, so I assume either the Lorenzens or Leo Sprinkle has priority in this observation. If others pre-date Bullard in mentioning this observation I would not be surprised, but I didn't find it in my search for this brief history.

Jim Schnabel reports David Jacobs was wondering about doorway amnesia problem while sitting in on Hopkins's sessions in 1985 and his thoughts took a psychological direction. Jacobs purportedly observed confabulation and screen memory also typically happens at the beginning of the abduction sequence and this when the experiencer is maximally frightened. Recollection most frequently goes wrong here. Descriptions of the nature of the character of the intruding alien goes all over the map at first. Memory settles down further into the experience and with additional sessions.

Raymond Fowler discusses doorway amnesia in the Andreasson abductions in Watchers II (1995) and The Andreasson Legacy (1997) mostly as an element taken along with other findings in Bullard's study, minimally showing how Andreasson's material is consistent with the larger abduction phenomenon. In Legacy the term appears no less than 9 times (217, 248, 254, 290, 326, 331, 332, 333, 354).

Jenny Randles is arguably the person who most seriously embraced the concept. She sought to expand on it in her personal research. There are reasons to think she did this based on a misimpression. In 1988 she wrote the following

One small point that stood out in Bullard's view was the existence of what he called 'doorway amnesia.' As we saw in my experiment in creative amnesia, people tend to imagine going through the door of the UFO. There seems no reason why one should imagine the rest, but not that. Yet in reality the way into the UFO is a blank in the vast majority of cases. That smacks of reality.(Randle 1988)

She had to have overlooked the table that pointed out doorway amnesia was in actual fact a minority – 17% and 26% of his 2 samples of abduction narratives.

In a paper for the landmark 1994 MIT abduction conference, Jenny reported the results of an imaginary abduction study after the example of Alvin Lawson with N = 20. She reports,

The transfer into the UFO was the first interesting result. In actual abductions very few cases involve recall of such entry – the so-called 'doorway amnesia' syndrome. Yet in this experiment only two respondents said they suddenly found themselves inside the UFO. All the remainder offered some account of entry. The most common - seven replies – was that they were injected with a drug by a hypodermic needle to render them unconscious. Typical other responses were "I would jump at the chance"... "I would expect to walk on board"... "beamed up"... "At ray gun point"... "transport beam." (Pritchard 1994)

I have to remark though that I was more surprised that she even had 2 examples given that respondents as part of the protocol give these responses in answer to direction: "If the occupants of the UFO wished to take you on board how would they do it?" [In Randles 1995, in fact, she said none of her twenty had; Randles 2000 though reiterates it was two.] In essence, this forces an improvisation.

No such protocol exists in regressions done 'in the field,' so to speak. Some fraction of abductions come fully formed with no need for regression. Another fraction presents with missing time and dreams of alien activity. Another fraction only presents with missing time. When regression proceeds, the claimant typically is allowed to build on the dream when that is present, and when not, to let the story form according to the course the person prefers which means he may jump straight to the onboard drama with little lingering over the details of procurement. Differences are pretty likely given this heterogeneity of method of collecting information and a contrast of 10% vs. 17% or 26% is less than mysterious. Given $N = 20$ you even lack sufficient footing to demonstrate high statistical significance to erase concerns of randomness, but if we play along that this actually is something needing explanation, we need only remark that dreams are not universally continua of experience – in the lingo of cinema, they have jump cuts and dissolves. If the dream's purpose is to confront some emotional conflict or fear, it won't dawdle with the small stuff or attempt to be realistic. It goes to the drama.

Skepticism about doorway amnesia as a signifier of the reality of alien abductions emerged early. Peter Rogerson (1994) reported doorway amnesia appeared in Malcolm Kent's The Terror Above Us (Tower, 1967) – a confessed literary hoax. It's on pp. 73-5 and both the Jason and Robert characters do not experience going through the opening of the saucer. Jason thinks he may have been drugged, but has no memory of being injected. Robert also was rendered unconscious when the beings touch him. Robert wakes up briefly and notes he is on a stretcher as it approaches the saucer, but the being touches him and he remembers nothing till he wakes up inside the saucer. There is a footing here if one wanted to suggest doorway amnesia started here as the start of a tradition, but admittedly it feels unlikely for any reader to notice such absence and feel a need to mimic it. On this point, Bullard seems on solid ground. But the fact that a work of fiction displays doorway amnesia before it appears in any real abductions has to demand theoretical attention.

I have similarly found doorway amnesia in fictional alien encounters long before the abduction mystery occurred and have mentioned this in the context of describing a fictional abduction I found particularly exciting forerunner of the modern mystery: John W. Campbell's "The Invaders" (1935) Enticing analogues can also be found outside of alien abductions very long before the present.

There is a legend that arose in the mid-eleventh century, of a queen in the area of the Sahara who ruled over the Almotavids named Zaynab al-Nafzawiya. She was formidable, renowned for her beauty, wealth, and influence and some said she spoke to jinn. Some called her a witch. Many sought her as a wife. She eventually chose to marry a peerless cameleer named Abu Bakr bin Uman al-Lamtuni. A legend is told that she led him blindfold to an underground lair full of gold: God gave it all to him by her hand, but when he led him back to the light: "he wist not how he had entered therein, nor how he had departed." (Fernandez-Armesto 2001) Admittedly one could regard this as an imperfect analogue; while it is magical and supernatural, it is self-evidently purposeful and, so, perhaps technically not mysterious enough. Charitably, it may merely be a freaky coincidence. Let's therefore roll out a rather more robust literary puzzler for abductioneers to ponder: a line in a study of Jules Verne's writings:

Entry to and exit from Verne's "other worlds" (For this what they amount to despite the Victorian insistence that they are extensions of our world) is usually explosive, instantaneous, and unconscious, with Verne befogging the way in which the transition occurs. (Bleiler, p. 837)

The most salient example has to be Verne's novel Hector Servadec, or the Career of a Comet, (1878). It is a tale of people who awake after a violent storm in Algeria to find themselves on a comet. It had grazed the earth and lifted off chunks of land. As the eccentric orbit takes them to colder realms, the characters survive by retreating into the caves of a volcano. Two years later the comet returns to earth and they find themselves back in Algeria. The ending somehow puzzlingly proves to be both reality and a dream. Here we lift some fragments from Bleiler's description:

The architecture of Hector Sevadec is that of a dream: swift entry via unconsciousness, sudden changes of locale, pictorially conceived landscapes that would be considered surreal if painted, the sensation of weightlessness and bounding... the curious activities of the characters: the leaping Spaniards, the voyaging (Wandering) Jew, the ever-eating Englishmen...and the whole adventure is one of Verne's cyclical nonhappenings, the voyageurs are back again where they started, at the exact second anniversary of their departure. (Bleiler, 840)

Bleiler remarks there is a strange purposelessness, there is no hero or heroics and everything is as it was at the start. There is much here reminiscent of abductions and even the earthly characters are not entirely exempt in abstractly conforming to their literary stereotypes as grays and reptoids do to their own earlier fictional and cinematic stereotypes in modern myth.

To this doubt of doorway amnesia being a signifier of the reality of abduction, one can add other considerations. It would be more impressive if one could demonstrate the trait was exclusive to one specific race of aliens or aliens engaged in one particular activity or guided by one particular motive. But the data does not line up that way. In double abductions, sometimes only one person has it, while ostensibly the 'corroborator' does not. Bullard himself brings up that he thinks Barney Hill shows doorway amnesia in the initial procurement, but Betty absolutely does not, remembering walking up the ramp and going through the door of the craft. Sometimes an abductee with claims of multiple abduction will show doorway amnesia for some events, but not others. Virginia Horton has definite amnesia how she enters the craft in a 1950 experience expressing sincere puzzlement when asked how she got inside and indicating she just gently moves from playing outside to being inside as though it happened in a dream. One decade later in France, though, she remembers standing upon and being lifted by conveyor-belt ramp of light. Sandra Larson has doorway amnesia in the first abduction, but when she is leaving the alien's world in a second event, she remembers seeing the aliens push in the door of the saucer and its hinges are, unusually, on the top and bottom. (Rogo 1980) Fowler notices some of his Watchers cases

have it, but others by the same person do not. Betty Aho Andreasson Aho's primary encounter has her flying over a saucer's stairs, but there is clearly doorway amnesia in the event explored in [Phase 2](#). Clearly, this is troubling if one is theorizing doorway amnesia results from some physical process associated with alien doors, alien spacecraft, or alien realms.

I feel I should mention that before making these points I consulted Bullard's study to find the cases displaying this special trait. Given how Bullard's study is loaded with tables and content motif lists and tables, it is something of an annoyance to realize that the study does not provide a list of the cases he regarded as displaying doorway amnesia. Though I do not think this oversight was motivated – the procurement chapter has no content list for any of the features – it makes exploration of the trait a tedious and contentious affair when you face ambiguities that make you wonder if this or that case made his cut. I assure you, while many cases are easy to decide whether or not they display the trait, a significant number are not. See Appendix for my research trying to replicate the statistics for Bullard's Top 50 abductions.

While I have given grounds for dismissing doorway amnesia as a reality signifier, we are still left with the puzzle of explaining it. I feel there are multiple possibilities. One of my first thoughts was to observe that first-time actors often skip lines, even whole scenes, in the grip of stage-fright. Certainly in the improvisational situation of a hypnotic session a person is likelier to be less than smoothly linear than a writer. A writer is more likely to have time to become aware he's skipped over something while creating a narrative and repair it than a person structuring things on the fly. A first-time hypnotic subject has less freedom to rewrite.

One can also make the observation that in dreams and relaxed states, the mind free associates. Lying in bed or on a couch is directly analogous to lying on a table in abduction. In jumping to the table, the mind is merely doing what comes naturally to the associative brain process. Forming a continuously flowing narrative sequence is again more naturally the work of a logical and awake mind, particularly if that person is a writer or academic such as Bullard.

Some instances may be modeled on cinematic shortcuts. In [Lost in Space](#) characters are sometimes moved around by what amounts to flash teleportation, notably in "Invaders from the 5th Dimension" (November 5, 1965) where Doctor Smith is hit and dragged by a ray and suddenly pops into the vast interior of an alien spaceship.

[Inseminoid](#) (1980) provides a different cinematic example, preceding Bullard's discussion and I strongly suspect done with no knowledge of ufo lore. There the absence of the movement of the woman into the room where she appears on a table is probably merely just an artifact of story-telling going straight to the scene of significance. It does not really matter how she got there; it only matters that the alien implanted an alien embryo into her.

The most salient explanation though must be an appeal to the disjointed nature of dreams. They have narrative structure, to be sure, and are not just random bursts of images. They have a story character, but in my experience jump cuts and edits are quite frequent, same as movies. But can one prove this more objectively? There are a number of books around with dreams recounted, but which would be a good source, a proper source? It quickly occurred to me: Jung. Every ufo buff surely has his book [A Modern Myth](#). It has a chapter on ufo dreams and they pre-date abductions to boot. I'd check them for analogues of doorway amnesia.

As quickly as the second dream narrative I found something notably reminiscent of doorway amnesia. In the dream the subject is walking city streets when cigar-shaped interplanetary machines appear. People around him flee, but he stays put, remembering Jung's advice not to run away from what you fear. It approaches and looks increasingly like a circular eye that is half blue, half white. The scene shifts and he now is in a hospital setting. His sister is worried, telling others the mere sight of the machine had burned his whole face. He suddenly realizes his head was bandaged up though he could not see it. The scene shift from seeing the ufo to a medical setting with no intervening movement of being taken by people to the building and in through the doors and checking in is fully analogous to the sort of abrupt scene shift abductioners speak of. The bonus element of this account is that the shift happens not into the ufo thus we don't have to worry about this being a 'real' abduction and have no good reason to invoke alien technological side effects. It cleanly demonstrates the how the dreaming process opts against full continuity of experience and edits straight from dangerous peril to dramatic effect.

Dream 4 in Jung's book contains another example. UFOs are crashing to earth and what first seems a scene of great awe eventually seems to carry a danger of shrapnel. The writer continues, "Then I must have gone indoors, for I found myself talking to a girl in a wicker chair." She was taking notes and engaged in some work and he is telling her there is great danger and she should along to safety. She points out the danger existed whichever way one chose. Further along he receives a prophecy that he interprets as meaning he would not die at that time, but in a war he expected in November 1963. [pp. 56-7] Here again, the material vaguely parallels abduction experiences in the presence of saucers, apocalyptic imagery, and a conversation with a studiously smarter person, but again while it looks tacit that there is scene shift where continuity would have obliged going towards a house and through doors, we can see the dream editing the material to strip things down to a crisis where a woman ignores a plea to follow him to safety and instead changes his perspective on how he should act or, in this instance, not act.

This two examples appear in a group of merely 7 dream accounts that Jung chose to transcribe into his book – 29%; a proportion seemingly a fair match to what Bullard found in his sets of abduction narratives. With that finding, there seems little point to delve any further. The solution to the puzzle of doorway amnesia is adequately accounted for by the nature of dreams.

You can forget about doorway amnesia if you want to.

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APPENDIX:

I tried to replicate Bullard's math, but I got more than he did probably because I tried to be generous rather than scrupulous and there is no firm discrimination of how to apply the term. If you have a plausible reason for the lack of memory, do you drop it or regard it as something one may extrapolate to other cases? He had 26% of 50, which means I should have found 13. I found 23.

PROCUREMENTS w/ doorway amnesia

Barney Hill	see Bullard
Pascagoula – Calvin	"The door I don't know how it opened."
Bill McGuire	floating in air above car, then sitting alone in domed room / Exit: sleeps in chair, awakes in car
John Hodges	enveloped by alien scene
Mrs. V	faints
Pat Roach	"I don't remember going out the door" Next memory: a big, bright room
Gerry Armstrong	Asked "Did you go with them into the craft" pendulum responds 'rather violently' against answering (133)
Carl Higdon	flash teleportation *
Aveley	blacks out on ascent
Shane Kurz	blacks out on ascent
Moody	does not remember scuffle that alien states he engaged in; calmed by light or sound device; paralyzed unconscious
Sandra Larson	Lorenzen quoted in article
David Stephens	riding in car, car hit by light, next he is looking out window as car skids to stop below – flash teleportation?
Travis Walton	zapped unconscious
Mona Stafford	maybe just unreported; remembers being taken out of car
Andreasson 1950	a moon craft approaches, paralysis, suddenly she's in a white room being prepped
Harrison Bailey	entrance only / when leaving he remembers going down ramp
Herrmann 1978	A tubular blue haze of light extends outwards; mind blurs as a humming sound envelopes him; awakes on a table

Herrmann 1979	tugged upwards & though determined to remain aware of everything, went through a period of semi-darkness
Virginia Horton 1950	playing "then all of a sudden I'm somewhere else," not abrupt "I'm somewhere else gently...like a dream"
Jocelino de Mattos	zapped like Travis Walton
Philip Osborne	yanked quickly toward craft, saw open triangular panel, but entering or deceleration not mentioned
Debbie Tomey	"somehow transported" (Intruders, p. 70) / exit by scene shift to backyard
PROCUREMENTS w/o doorway amnesia	
AVB	carried up swaying ladder
Betty Hill	walked up ramp through a door
Herb Schirmer	Up a ladder
Seewaldt	"taken up in an orange beam of light, put on a table"
José Antônio da Silva	carried through door
Pascagoula- Hickson	saw an opening like pressing open a rubber coin squeeze purse
Pat Roach – Debbie	floated, saw portholes
Alice Johnson	pulled up under her arms and going through a circle of light at the bottom of the craft
Sandra Larson	recalled how she enters, door opened when they pushed it, it had hinges on top and bottom
Andreasson 1967	swooping motion through house door, craft door opens with steps, swoops over stairs into a room [why stairs?]
Andreasson Phase 2	She floats to a really big glass door that is really many glass doors. "The Great Door shall guide."
Andreasson 1961	never enters craft, so none possible
Bob Luca 1967	he sees door open as he floats towards craft
Bob Luca 1944	does not enter craft, only telepathic contact
Brian Scott	lifted up to a door
John Williams	no amnesia; no saucer thus no door
Mr. L	mummied up
Louise Smith	car sucked into saucer
Sara Shaw	conveyor belt and the narrow door where aliens have problem of maneuvering her through because of large breasts
Rachel Jones	The being carried her to a place where she passed through a door into a chamber with a cold floor
Julio Fernandez (Soria)	A metallic cylinder extrudes from the center and they enter it and an elevator takes them up.
Steven Kilburn	walks up a small ramp
John of Maine 12-14-78	remembers going up a ramp
Virginia Horton 1960	standing upon and being lifted by conveyor-belt ramp of light (Missing Time, p. 203)
Lori Briggs	lifted with light, passes quickly thru, sees craft and in an instant is inside – "swift" [they do every thing fast]
Antônio Carlos Ferreira	He is floated to a spaceship and obliged to stoop when passing through the doorway.
Luli Oswald	beam pulls car up into craft – there is a memory jump, but ambiguous if after inside or before
Megan Elliot	car pulled up into craft, alien mentally yanks car-door open
Longmont, Colorado	Car lifted into a dense cloud; Doorway, a long ramp made of light – "They go inside" (walking?) Mary suddenly gone
Alan Godfrey	He gets out of car, enters an opening in ufo, and starts conversing
Jack T. 1971	"I followed the alien and entered the ufo. I noticed the wall inside the door" asked to disrobe,

tested.

Jack T. 1964

driven by car to craft, escorted inside, and asked to lie on cot

* Carl Higdon flash teleportation quote:

"I guess!" So then the next thing that formed in my mind was, "Well, we was inside this cubicle!" (247) already strapped into a seat
"And I said might as well." The next thing we was inside this cubicle type of office (299)

Miscellaneous oddness:

Mystic variant or mere banality?

Betty: There was a door there but you wouldn't know there was a door. But there was a door where we came and there was a door where those lights came in.

Bob: I want you to remember the door – where it is – so that you can draw it for me later. Okay? Take a good look at it.

Betty: I don't think I can draw it.

Bob: Just memorize it. Look at it. Study it.

*Betty: But it, it **blends** and I, I don't think, I don't think I could draw it.*

Bob: Just remember the best you can.

Raymond Fowler, The Watchers, Bantam, 1991, p. 101.

Drugs!

March 1993 => winter 1989

Watchers II, pp. 40-46.

A gray enters and approaches Bob Luca though this blue-suited type normally abducts Betty. He squeezed Bob's forehead and forces him to drink a spoonful of some liquid, presumed a sedative. Bob says repeatedly he won't go till at last he goes. He ends up on a new streamlined table. [singular, but notably analogous to her Jenny study's seeing people drugged to bring them aboard. Better though, Jane Murphy (March 1981) is chloroformed and when that fails is given an injection - see Carl Nagaitis & Philip Mantle, Without Consent: A Comprehensive Survey of Missing Time & Abduction Phenomena Marlowe & Co., 1994, pp. 182-7.]

UFOs over Illinois

Monroe county, southeast of St. Louis, had a UFO incident in late October. On the 23rd, around 7PM, some excited witnesses reported a UFO to the northeast of Hecker, Illinois. The police decided to check it out and went out to a rural location where they, and some locals with a telescope, observed the UFO to the northeast hovering and changing colors. The UFO slowly began to rise as time passed and, after 8PM, another bright object appeared in a more easterly direction.

These observations sound strikingly familiar. A check of Stellarium for the local time of 7 PM and 9 PM:



Capella scintillating seems to be a strong candidate for the initial sighting at 7PM. The news report stated the second object appeared "after 8PM". Jupiter rose around 8:30PM indicating it may have been the other object.

The police left the scene when they saw no danger. I wonder what the witnesses saw in the telescope? It is hard to say but a follow-up news report had people in the area talking about the UFO. One person suggested that the UFO had four lights surrounding it. That sounds a lot like a small telescopic view of the planet Jupiter and its moons. Other witnesses have stated they have been seeing this UFO for most of the month of October, which indicates an astronomical object like Jupiter.

Some photographs were made and they look something like the images I have of Sirius on the front cover of this issue. The auto-focus on cameras can result in stars appear slightly out of focus giving an enlarged image that sometimes looks like a disc. In my opinion, this sighting probably was initiated by the star Capella. Observations later in the evening (after 8:30PM) were probably the planet Jupiter.

UFOs on the tube

Close Encounters of the third kind - The real story

This was broadcast on the Smithsonian channel and I found the title interesting. I already knew that Spielberg had based his movie on actual UFO events and that Dr. Hynek was his technical advisor. This program tried to show what cases played a role in the production.

The case the program selected to demonstrate police officers interacting with UFOs was less than compelling. This was the case of two police officers who saw three objects in the sky that moved up, down, and sideways near Dexter Michigan. The program performed a test using some experimental marsh gas to test the "swamp gas" explanation. The witnesses, who are still alive, observed the test from a distance. They all agreed that these marsh gas experiments did not replicate what they recalled seeing over four decades before. The show then went into a conspiracy theory where these witnesses recalled Hynek had told them that Washington directed him to give the swamp gas explanation. The show should have done a bit more research because the Bluebook file has Hynek's report on the matter. Hynek never mentioned at any time (in 1966 or years later) that he was forced to give this explanation. The show should have also described how Hynek had gone with Michigan police officers in the area to see a UFO one night and discovered they were reporting that the star Arcturus was a UFO! He would later state that this was a very sobering moment for him. That might have put the case described in a different light than what the show portrayed.

What dominated most of the program was the Betty and Barney Hill incident. Kathleen Marden and Stanton Friedman laid out their case. Never mentioned by Marden was that the two hours of missing time can readily be explained by the roads they were using and the many stops that they kept making. The program examined the hypnosis part of the story, which Stanton Friedman promoted. According to Friedman, both Betty and Barney told the same general story, which meant they were recalling an actual event. However, Professor French stated that Betty had nightmares and probably shared them with Barney resulting in a contamination of his subconscious. Dr. Peter Naish conducted an experiment where a subject, under hypnosis, was asked to recall an event that never happened. The subject was more than willing to provide specific details about this false memory.

The program also demonstrated that the Majorie Fish map was a complete bust. While the map was highly promoted by Friedman in his segment, the program pointed out her 3 foot model was scaled to the point that even slight errors in computed distances would create a map that did not match Betty Hill's sketch. This was demonstrated when the new values for distances of stars were incorporated by Dr. Francisco Diego. The match Fish had created suddenly vanished.

The rest of the program discussed the search for extraterrestrial life and how it would affect humankind. Mr. Friedman did not, or was not allowed to, call SETI the "silly effort to investigate". This part of the program made a case for SETI that was very good. The concept that music (very much like the scene in the movie) was the best way to communicate with an alien race was very interesting.

In the concluding remarks, Dr. Douglas Vacooh stated, *"...It's not just to learn more about the stars or aliens being out there. It is a new chance to learn about ourselves..."* While he is talking about SETI, he could also be talking about the human element involved in UFO reports. UFO reports have shown us how individuals misperceive events as alien spaceships. Their preconceptions are affecting what they see. Instead of "I know what I saw", it is more like "I know what I think I saw or wanted to see".

Overall the program was not too bad and was worth watching once. I wouldn't waste my money on the DVD.

Buy it , Borrow it, or Bin it!

The IUR DVD - CUFOS

While this is really not a book, it is a collection of all the issues of the International UFO Reporter(IUR). I originally thought it was not going to include the later issues but the DVD, as I received it, contained everything right up to the final issue. Kudos to CUFOS for their effort on this.

Having never been a subscriber to the IUR and read only a handful of issues, I wanted to read the journal in sequence starting in 1976. To me it was revealing on how the journal changed over the years.

Reading each issue in sequence showed an evolution of the "journal" from what appeared to be an honest quest for evidence into a UFO propaganda sheet for certain authors, where they could write just about anything they wanted with little critical review.

The articles in the issues of IUR vary from good to bad. I found many of them written from one point of view where the authors seemed very biased in their investigations. I had to shudder when I saw that several of these had valid explanations, which were completely ignored or missed by the authors. It is almost as if the editors did not even attempt to verify the research that was published. How can a journal, that professes to be "scientific" in nature, fail to even see if there were other possibilities?

I was also disappointed that the "Frontiers of science" pdfs only contained the International UFO reporter section. Some of the articles listed on the cover seemed very interesting. I would have enjoyed reading them.

Despite these negatives, I still found the DVD a good resource to acquire even though I felt the price of \$100 was a bit steep. I definitely would recommend people to "buy it".